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# Truman as Commander in Chief: a Study of President Harry S. Truman's Concept and Exercise of the Military Function of the Presidency, 1945-1953 (Volumes I and II).

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# TRUMAN AS COMMANDER IN CHIEF: A STUDY OF PRESIDENT HARRY S. TRUMAN'S CONCEPT AND EXERCISE OF THE MILITARY FUNCTION OF THE PRESIDENCY, 1945-1953.

VOLUME I

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ABSTRACT

The drafters of the Constitution wisely and deliberately subordinated the armed forces of the nation under a civilian, the President of the United States. In the turbulent years since the early 1940's the military command function of the presidency has increased dramatically in importance as the Chief Executives have emerged as virtually unchecked wielders of enormous military might.

This work examines Harry S. Truman's role as Commander in Chief during the full period of his tenure, 1945-1953. The methodology employed is a generally chronological narration of the military events of the period as they relate to Truman. In each instance, an attempt is made to analyze the President's decision-making process in terms of the information available to him, the existing pressures, and the relationship of his decision to his own rather well-defined concepts of how a commander in chief should function. Although recognizing that it is not entirely possible to isolate any one function of the presidential office, or to determine with any great precision whether an act is political, diplomatic, or strategic in motivation, this study is premissed on the belief that sufficient military distinctions can be determined. The implicit operating assump-

tion is, of course, that there is value to be derived from an examination of the military function of the modern presidency.

This dissertation does not attempt a full military history of the period. Rather, it is a selective recounting of those events in which Truman's decisions were of some historic significance. Among the subjects examined at length is Truman's stewardship in the waning days of World War II. A separate chapter is devoted to the decision to use the atomic bomb against Japan and the postwar nuclear policies which the President established. As a reformer, Truman had a major effect on the military. His unification of the armed services, attempts to obtain a system of universal military training, and his order ending racial segregation in the military are all analyzed in detail. A chapter on the Cold War concentrates on the Berlin Blockade, aid to Greece and Turkey, and the containment doctrine. The decisional process by which Truman determined to involve the nation in the Korean War merited extended study, as did the President's conduct of the war itself. The activities of General Douglas MacArthur as commander in the Far East in opposition to the limited-war policies of the President endangered the very basis of the civil-military relationship. How Truman responded to this major challenge to his authority as Commander in Chief formed a fitting conclusion to this study.

In the preparation of this work the major unpublished sources employed were found in the Truman Library in Independence, Missouri, and the Modern Military Records Division of the National Archives in Washington, D.C. Additional archival materials were found in the Historical Records Division, Chief of Naval Operations, Washington Naval Yard, and the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library in Abilene, Kansas. These materials, along with numerous government publications, published memoirs, and various secondary sources were examined in an effort to provide a balanced account of Truman's conduct of his role as Commander in Chief.

# CHAPTER I

## THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

> He's the absolute commander of the armed forces of the United States in time of war. He's the commander of the armed forces when they're called out for any purpose, if he wants to take control of them. Nobody else can do it. It's his business to outline policy for the military. . . . He has to know what the policies are about, and then he has to go to work on them. It's his privilege to appoint generals--and sometimes to fire them. . . .[1]

The awesome military powers of the presidency are derived from one brief line in the Constitution (Art. II, Sect. 2) which reads: "The President shall be the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the militia of the several States, when called into the actual service of the United States." This vaguely-worded clause provides the American President with power resources that are both difficult to fully define and untested as to their absolute limits.[2]

> The war powers of the President are in fact so great and so indefinite that their nature will not be fully known until our Republic has passed through all its

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[1] Truman Speaks (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 6. Hereinafter cited as Truman Speaks.

[2] Dorothy Schaffter and Dorothy M. Mathews (eds.), "The Powers of the President as Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States," House Miscellaneous Documents, 84 Cong., 2 Sess., Vol. 1, No. 443 (Washington: 1956), 16. Hereinafter cited as Schaffter and Mathews, "Powers of the President as Commander in Chief."

> trials and ceased to be. The President's war powers are the unexplored "Dark Continent" of American Government.[3]

The broad spectrum of military powers now available evolved through customary usage, judicial interpretations, legislative enactments and the obvious exigencies imposed by modern military technology. Certainly James Madison and the other drafters of the Constitution had not anticipated that the clause meant any more than that the President was to have a general, supreme authority over the military. In the Federalist Papers (No. 69), Alexander Hamilton wrote that the title of Commander in Chief "would amount to nothing more than the supreme command and direction of the military and naval forces, as first general and admiral of the Confederacy. . . ."[4] Discussing this military command function at greater length in No. 74 of the Federalist Papers, Hamilton wrote:

> The propriety of this provision is so evident in itself and it is at the same time so consonant to the precedents of the State constitutions in general that little need be said to explain or enforce it. Even those of them which have in other respects coupled the Chief Magistrate with a council have for the most part concentrated the military authority in him alone. Of all the cares or concerns of government, the

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[3]Wilfred E. Binkley, The Man in the White House: His Powers and Duties (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1958), 228.

[4]Clinton Rossiter (ed.), The Federalist Papers (New York: New American Library of World Literature, 1961), 418. Hereinafter cited as Rossiter (ed.), Federalist Papers.

> direction of war most peculiar demands those qualities which distinguish the exercise of power by a single hand. The direction of war implies the direction of the common strength; and the power of directing and employing the common strength forms a usual and essential part in the definition of the executive authority.[5]

Hamilton seemed to feel that the division between civilian and military powers of the executive office should disappear, particularly in time of war.[6] Certainly, Hamilton, and most of the other Founding Fathers, believed that the primary purpose of the Commander in Chief clause was to ensure that the President, in the exercise of his war (emergency) powers, would be unmistakably superior to any of his military or civilian subordinates. They conceived of a clearly-established path of authority all emanating from a single source, the civilian head of the executive branch of the national government.[7]

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[5]Ibid., No. 74, 447.

[6]Ernest R. May, "The President Shall Be Commander in Chief," in May (ed.), The Ultimate Decision: The President as Commander in Chief (New York: George Braziller, 1960), 4. Hereinafter cited as May, "The President Shall Be Commander in Chief."

[7]At the beginning of the twentieth century, Secretary of War Elihu Root accomplished a major re-organization of the War Department. Root was influenced in these reforms by the "New Hamiltonianism," which was an adaptation of business organizational techniques to governmental operations advocated by the Progressives. The Root reforms were predicated on the assumption that, ". . . clear lines of accountability provide effective political control." See Paul Y. Hammond, Organizing for Defense: The American Military Establishment in the Twentieth Century (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1961), 23. Hereinafter cited as Hammond, Organizing for Defense.

Civilian control over the conduct of military operations was accepted as a fundamental tenet. It was felt that the democratic process would be under constant threat if a military commander were to be granted ultimate authority for the conduct of the armed forces of the nation. In the states' ratifying conventions the only objection to this clause, as Joseph Story explained in his Commentaries, was that "it would be dangerous to let him (the President) command in person." But, Story added, "The proprietary of admitting the President to be Commander-in-Chief, so far as to give orders and have a general superintendency, was admitted."[8]

Numerous court tests of the war and emergency powers have worked their way through the judicial system. The general principle which has emerged is that the courts accept the President's supremacy over the military without significant limitations.

After studying hundreds of court cases involving tests of the President's military powers, Clinton Rossiter has concluded that the commander in chief enjoys ". . . a peculiar degree of freedom from the review and restraints

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[8]Quoted in Edward S. Corwin, The President: Office and Powers, 1787-1957 (New York: New York University Press, 1957), 228. Hereinafter cited as Corwin, The President. See also Clarence A. Berdahl, War Powers of the Executive in the United States (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois, 1920), 117. Hereinafter cited as Berdahl, War Powers of the Executive.

of the judicial process."[9] Rossiter's study of the subject of the military functions of the Chief Executive led him to offer five "general propositions" by way of conclusions: (1) Judicial opinions regarding these powers are expressed in uncharacteristically "guarded" terms; (2) The terminology of these Supreme Court decisions are quite general, avoiding explicit definition of the limits of the President's powers and any express delineation of those military powers belonging to the Congress or the President exclusively; (3) With respect to an "improper exercise of the war powers" the Supreme Court has vacillated considerably regarding its own authority to act, leaving this a shadow area with respect to precedential evidence; (4) When granting the validity of an exercise of martial authority, the Supreme Court never bases its decision on the commander in chief clause alone, preferring, whenever possible, to cite any congressional action that can be construed as endorsement of the President's decisions; (5) The Court has been "realistic" in its decisions in this area, following in general the observation made by Chief Justice Hughes, in 1934, that "the war power of the Federal Government . . . is a power

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[9]Clinton Rossiter, The Supreme Court and the Commander in Chief (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1951), 2. Hereinafter cited as Rossiter, Supreme Court and the Commander in Chief.

to wage war successfully (and that) so, also, we have a fighting constitution."[10]

There seems little doubt that, so far as the courts are concerned, the President's control over the armed forces of the nation are complete and little subject to legal restraint.[11] The judiciary, when confronted with tests of the war powers, have generally accepted Hamilton's view that ". . . there can be no limitation of that authority which is to provide for the defense and protection of the community . . . in any matter essential to the formation, direction, or support of the national forces."[12] Rossiter's study of this subject has led him to conclude that not only do the courts accept Hamilton's view, but that the Constitution encourages exercise of the war powers and the restraint on presidential use of these

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[10]Ibid., 4-7. Rossiter cites the Hughes statement from Home Building and Loan Association v. Blaisdell, 290 U.S. 398, 426 (1934).

[11]U.S., Congress, Senate, Committees on Foreign Relations and Armed Services, Powers of the President to Send the Armed Forces Outside the United States. Committee Print, 82nd Cong., 1st Sess., 1951, 1-2. Hereinafter cited as Powers of the President to Send Armed Forces Outside the United States. See also U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Background Information on the Use of United States Armed Forces in Foreign Countries. House Report No. 127, 82nd Cong., 1st Sess., 1951, 50-52. Hereinafter cited as Background Information on the Use of United States Armed Forces in Foreign Countries.

[12]Rossiter (ed.), Federalist Papers, No. 23, 154.

powers is a "moral limitation" alone.[13]

The Constitution specifically delegates to Congress the power to declare war, to raise and support an army and navy and "to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces."[14] The language of these clauses would seem to indicate that the drafters of the Constitution intended that the legislative branch have coextensive powers over the armed forces in order to offset the possibility of a military dictatorship. While permanent military dictatorships have not resulted, Congress has failed to exercise an effective check on presidential control over military policy.[15]

Not only has the Congress been generally ineffective in limiting the President's use of military powers, but it has also often been unable to protect its own delegated military authority from executive usurpation. This is particularly true of the post-World War II era. The congressional role in formulation of military policy is

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[13]Rossiter, Supreme Court and the Commander in Chief, 8.

[14]See Article I, Section 8.

[15]Dorothy B. James, The Contemporary Presidency (New York: Pegasus, 1969), 159, 165. Hereinafter cited as James, Contemporary Presidency. See also, U.S., Congress, House, The Powers of the President as Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States. House Misc. Doc. 443, 84 Cong., 2 Sess., 1956, 16-17. Hereinafter cited as Powers of the President as Commander in Chief. . . . See also, Berdahl, War Powers of the Executive, 117-18.

peripheral at best, ordinarily being confined to lobbying for certain defense programs, the development of particular weapons systems and the creation, expansion or continuation of various military bases, ". . . for reasons of constituency politics."[16]

Aside from these considerations, in the normal course of events, Congress provides the force levels and military budgets requested by the President. It is difficult for Congress to challenge the validity of presidential requests in these two areas where the President must have legislative sanction. The only solid ground for attack would be that the troop or budget requests are not consonant with the broad objectives of the nation's military policies. As often as not, these goals are established by the President (as a popular leader) in the first place. To attack these goals, or their proposed legislative implementation, would require substantial proof often not available to Congress. The President's advantage lies in the fact that through control of the executive agencies, he monopolizes the available information. The Congress obtains its knowledge of military policy matters through hearings conducted by the various committees concerned with military and foreign affairs. Of necessity, the witnesses are high-ranking civil

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[16]James, Contemporary Presidency, 165.

and military officials of the Pentagon, directly responsible to the commander in chief:

> As a result, the military exercises a near monopoly on presentation of alternatives to Congress. The widespread feeling of Congressmen has been found to be one of grudging acquiescence in military proposals, on the grounds expressed by one leading Representative on military affairs: "How the hell do we know that should be considered anyway? We mostly reflect what the military men tell us."[17]

The other great military check held by the Congress, the exclusive power to declare war, has seldom been employed, simply because the United States has been in a formally-declared state of war on only a few occasions. Yet, in the period 1789-1956, there are more than one hundred separate instances of American military forces engaging in hostile actions on foreign soil at the order of the President, without a declaration of war or other form of prior approval on the part of the Congress.[18] In most cases the President's action was based on his

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[17] Ibid., 165-66.

[18] Charles S. Murphy to Richard B. Russell, February 19, 1951. Papers of Charles S. Murphy, White House Files, "Presidential Powers" folder, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, Missouri. Hereinafter cited as Murphy Papers, Truman Library. See also, Powers of the President to Send Armed Forces Outside the United States, 2, 8. In an article on the war powers, a national magazine wrote: ". . . U.S. Presidents have ordered troops into position or action without a formal congressional declaration a total of 149 times." Time, XCVI (June 1, 1970), 37. For a detailed listing of the occassions on which U.S. troops were engaged on foreign territory, see, Background Information on the Use of United States Armed Forces in Foreign Countries, 55-62.

judgment that an "emergency" situation existed, necessitating immediate decision. Often the Congress has subsequently approved the President's action by a resolution or war declaration.[19] The problem is, of course, that Congress is confronted with a fait accompli: it can endorse or condemn; it cannot undo . . . the spilling of blood being an irrevocable action by its very nature. A distinguished senator, Arthur H. Vandenberg, writing in 1947, expressed the congressional dilemma this way:

> The trouble is that these "crises" never reach Congress until they have developed to a point where Congressional discretion is pathetically restricted. When things finally reach a point where a President asks us to "declare war" there usually is nothing left except to "declare war."[20]

In practice, if not in law, once war or a national emergency has been declared, total military authority is assumed by the President. This power of command given to

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[19]Rossiter, Supreme Court and the Commander in Chief, 66; Henry H. Fowler, War Powers of the President (Washington: Industrial College of the Armed Forces, 1948), 12-14. Hereinafter cited as Fowler, War Powers of the President. In fact, Congress has never declared war on its own initiative, nor has it ever refused a President's request for a war declaration. Background Information on the Use of United States Armed Forces in Foreign Countries, 19.

[20]Arthur H. Vandenberg, Jr. (ed.), The Private Papers of Senator Vandenberg (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1952), 342. Hereinafter cited as Vandenberg, Private Papers. Senator Vandenberg, a Republican from Michigan, was chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in the 80th Congress.

the President is not effectively limited by the Congress, nor willingly shared with that body by the commander in chief.[21] A staff study by lawyers attached to the White House, Justice, Defense and State departments in 1948 offered the opinion that ". . . it seems doubtful whether Congress has the Constitutional power to limit the President's freedom of action in disposing of the forces under his command."[22] It is a fair generalization to conclude from the published authorities and historical evidence that the constitutional separation of military powers is ignored in practice. The President today enjoys an almost exclusive control over the military forces of the United States.[23]

James Madison was the first President to serve while the country was engaged in war. Marcus Cunliffe, in an

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[21]Unsigned Report, "Constitutional Power of the President and of Congress to Determine Roles and Missions for the Armed Forces," Record Group (RG) 340, Office of Administrative Assistant, Secretary of the Air Force, Special Interest File 4A, National Archives.

[22]Charles S. Murphy to John McCormack, February 19, 1951, Murphy Papers, White House Files, "Presidential Powers" folders, Truman Library.

[23]Berdahl, War Powers of the Executive, 121; Fowler, War Powers of the President, 18; Rossiter, Supreme Court and the Commander in Chief, 75-77; Background Information on the Use of United States Forces in Foreign Countries, 50-54; Edward H. Foley, Jr., "Some Aspects of the Constitutional Powers of the President," American Bar Association Journal, XXVII (August, 1941), 486.

essay on Madison as commander in chief, acknowledges that "there seems to be an almost unanimous conviction (among historians) that . . . Madison was a ludicrous commander in chief."[24] Cunliffe's own view is that such a conclusion has not been proven. However, Cunliffe does agree that the Canadian campaign of 1812 resulted in a complete rout of the American forces; that the command of the war showed no discernible improvement in 1813; and, in 1814, "Madison was fortunate to escape military disaster and the possible collapse of the Union."[25]

Madison lacked the leadership qualities necessary in a commander in chief, and his Secretary of War, William Eustis, was incompetent. Early in 1813, Madison improved American military prospects by replacing Eustis with John Armstrong. The new Secretary reorganized the command system of the War Department and replaced the superannuated Revolutionary War veterans with younger and more aggressive field commanders. The efficiency of the command structure was further advanced by the Congress in March, 1813: Legislation passed authorizing the President to re-establish the offices of Inspector General, Surgeon General and Adjutant General and to appoint eight topographical engineers to the

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[24]Marcus Cunliffe, "Madison (1812-1815)," in May (ed.), Ultimate Decision, 25. Hereinafter cited as Cunliffe, "Madison (1812-1815)."

[25]Ibid., 25-26.

War Department.[26] All of this would certainly not have been enough had England not been so completely preoccupied with defeating Napoleon. However, combined with a considerable amount of good fortune, it was sufficient. The War of 1812 represents neither victory, nor defeat. It was a draw.[27]

Historians, as Marcus Cunliffe has indicated, have been all but unanimous in ascribing this military debacle to the timidity and ineptness of the Commander in Chief. Cunliffe has defended his own unwillingness to judge the President's exercise of the war powers by listing five factors that "inhibit" a true appraisal of Madison:

a) the unpopularity of the War of 1812
b) the limited, ill-defined, and peripheral nature of the war
c) the nature of Republican party doctrine
d) the lack of precedents to guide the nation or the president in war
e) friction between the principal figures involved in the war effort.[28]

Perhaps the judgments passed on Madison by others, such as Bradford Perkins ("He reigned but he did not rule"),[29] have

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[26]U.S. Army, Office of the Chief of Military History, American Military History (Washington, 1969), 139. Hereinafter cited as OCMH, American Military History.

[27]Ibid., 146.

[28]Cunliffe, "Madison (1812-1815)," 45.

[29]Bradford Perkins, "Madison Was a Failure," in Perkins, (ed.), The Causes of the War of 1812: National Honor or National Interest? (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1962), 114.

been too severe. And perhaps Cunliffe is correct in saying that the only fair assessment of Madison as commander in chief is that he conducted the war to the best of his ability.[30] He is certainly on firm ground in (d) above: Madison was handicapped by being the first to administer an unknown quantity, the executive power over the nation in war. But his conduct in this unfamiliar condition left few precedents to guide James K. Polk, the next wartime president.

Polk had indicated to the cabinet on his very first day in office that he would insist on the Rio Grande River as the southern border of Texas and that he considered acquisition of California a major objective of his presidency.[31] Polk's offer to purchase the California territory was a sham exercise for he would accept only his own terms. And when Mexico refused to treat with the minister bearing his demands, the President ordered Zachary Taylor to move his forces south from the Nueces River to the Rio Grande, "an order that altered the situation by making war a probability rather than a mere possibility."[32] There can be little doubt that Polk

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[30]Cunliffe, "Madison (1812-1815)," 52.

[31]Otis A. Singletary, The Mexican War (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 149.

[32]Ibid., 150-51.

precipitated hostilities with Mexico. His objective in doing so was to take by military conquest all Mexican land north of the Gila and Rio Grande Rivers and from Texas westward to the Pacific.[33]

> When war broke out he made it . . . clear that he intended to be the commander in chief. The president, Polk declared, was held responsible for the conduct of the war; he intended to be responsible, and he exercised that responsibility to the limit of his endurance. He determined the general strategy of military and naval operations; he chose commanding officers; he gave personal attention to supply problems; he energized so far as he could the General Staff; he controlled the military and naval estimates; and he used the cabinet as a major coordinating agency . . . . The president was the center on which all else depended; Hamilton's doctrine of the unity of the executive power was seldom more truly exemplified.[34]

Polk clearly interpreted his function as commander in chief as including not only military policy-making and supreme command, but leadership in determining overall campaign strategy as well.[35] Although devoid of any

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[33]OCMH, American Military History, 166.

[34]Leonard D. White, "Polk," in May (ed.), Ultimate Decision, 58. Hereinafter cited as White, "Polk."

[35]Ibid., 60. Since general military terminology must be employed throughout this study, it is necessary to define what is meant by some of these terms. Tactics refers to the choice of battle formations and the actual direction of forces when actively engaged with an enemy. Strategy originally meant the planning of operations by a nation's commanding generals, utilizing the personnel and materiel made available by the civilian leadership. With the growing technological complexity of modern warfare in the twentieth century, for the United States at least, this has come to mean that the civilian leaders in the executive branch determine general strategy and exercise control over all

military training, as were the majority of his cabinet and other advisers, the President did a sound job of administering the war effort. His decisions were sound and generally correct.[36]

President Polk also established a precedent for future commanders in chief with respect to the war powers of the Congress. In the first place, it was Polk's ordering of Taylor's army into territory between the Nueces and the Rio Grande that led inevitably to blood-letting on both sides. Then, Polk asked the Congress to declare war on the basis of the hostilities which were engendered by his decisions. The Congress exercised its constitutional power to declare war, but, in reality, it merely acknowledged an existing condition created by the President.

With respect to the other military controls granted specifically to the Congress by the Constitution, Polk also had his way. He demonstrated that in this area, the principle of separation of powers simply was not operable.

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major operational decisions in the theaters of command. In either case, strategy is designed to implement policy, the latter being defined as the purpose for which a war is fought. Policy is formulated by civilian leaders, usually the President, who determine the priorities of men and supplies to be allocated to the military. These definitions are taken, in large part, from T. Harry Williams, Americans at War (Revised edition, New York: Collier Books, 1962), 13-14. Hereinafter cited as Williams, Americans at War.

[36]White, "Polk," 73; Williams, Americans at War, 49-50.

Congress, being a large, deliverative body with an inherent inertia, showed that it was structurally incapable of exercising coordinate authority over the conduct of war. Polk led the Congress in the establishment and financing of the military and the disposition of these forces.[37] In the first real test of its military authority, the Congress had - more by default, than design - relinquished its powers to the commander in chief.

During the Mexican War an effective unity of the military command structure was established, with James Polk as the single, ultimate source of all military decisions. The President had clearly shown in his conduct of the war, as Leonard White concluded in his study of Polk that "a president could be a commander in chief. A president could run a war."[38]

It is an irony of history that a Whig Representative from Illinois, who was highly critical of Polk's extra-ordinary war powers, was to become the next wartime commander in chief. Abraham Lincoln first gained national attention by his "Spot Resolutions" which attacked the President for ordering Taylor down to the Rio Grande and

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[37]White, "Polk," 73.

[38]Ibid., 74-75.

justifying his demand for war on the resultant fighting.[39] Lincoln consistently maintained that the Mexican War ". . . was unnecessarily and unconstitutionally commenced by the President."[40]

Lincoln not only attacked Polk for unlawfully initiating the war with Mexico, he also condemned the methods exercised by the President in his conduct of the war. For example, in a speech at Wilmington, Delaware, in June, 1848, a newspaper recorded that Lincoln denounced Polk's administration as despotic, unresponsive to the will of the people and one characterized by an abusive use of power. The article, apparently paraphrasing Lincoln, continues: "The manner in which the present Executive had carried on the Mexican war should condemn it . . . before the whole people. . . . it was a war of

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[39]Text of Lincoln's "Spot" Resolution, introduced in the House of Representatives, December 22, 1847, is in Roy P. Basler (ed.), The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln (8 vols., New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1953), I, 420-22. Hereinafter cited as Basler (ed.), Collected Works of Lincoln.

[40]Lincoln to William H. Herndon, February 1, 1848, ibid., 446-48. Lincoln repeated substantially the same contentions elsewhere in this period. See, for examples, Lincoln, Speech to House of Representatives, January 12, 1848, ibid., 431-32; Lincoln to Usher F. Linder, March 22, 1848, Ibid., 457-58.

conquest brought into existence to catch votes."[41]

There is little reason to doubt that at least part of Lincoln's attack on Polk's application of the war powers was motivated by partisan political considerations. In addition, Lincoln found himself in the awkward position of denouncing the autocratic powers of the commander in chief but voting in the House for war legislation that had the effect of continuing and extending these powers. Lincoln voted his approval of the Administration's requests because he recognized the need to fully support the armed forces in what, in the final analysis, he believed to be a just war.[42] Certainly many congressmen during Lincoln's presidency, finding themselves in the same quandary, could sympathize with the Representative from Illinois.

Even granting that Lincoln was influenced by

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[41]The newspaper account of Lincoln's speech at Wilmington on June 10, 1848, is taken from the Delaware State Journal, June 13, 1848, as reprinted in Basler (ed.), Collected Works of Lincoln, I, 475-76. The account of Lincoln's views is undoubtedly accurate, for in a letter two weeks earlier, Lincoln urged that the Whigs campaigning for Zachary Taylor in 1848, should not attempt to justify, ". . . Mr. Polk's mode of prosecuting the war." Lincoln to Usher F. Linder, February 20, 1848, ibid., 453.

[42]In a House speech in January, 1848, Lincoln said he hoped Polk could prove that Mexico attacked American territory, since he (Lincoln) was concerned about the "doubtful propriety" of some of his votes on the war. Speech, January 12, 1848, ibid., 431-42. See also Lincoln to Herndon, June 22, 1848, ibid., 490-92.

partisanship and the limited perspective of a back row seat in the House, it must still be acknowledged that he sincerely deplored in principle this erosion of congressional authority. He revealed this genuine concern in a letter written in February, 1848:

> Allow the President to invade a neighboring nation, whenever he shall deem it necessary to repel an invasion, and you will allow him to do so, whenever he may choose to say he deems it necessary for such purpose--and you allow him to make war at pleasure. Study to see if you can fix any limit to his power in this respect. . . .
> The provision of the Constitution giving the war-making powers to Congress, was dictated, as I understand it, by the following reasons. Kings had always been involving their people in wars, pretending generally, if not always, that the good of the people was the object. This, our Convention understood to be the most oppressive of all Kingly oppressions; and they resolved to so frame the Constitution that no one man should hold the power of bringing this oppression upon us. But your view destroys the whole matter, and places our President where kings have always stood.[43]

Less than fifteen years later the author of this letter will stand, in the totality of the war powers he acquired as President, "where kings have always stood."

It fell to Lincoln to act as commander in chief in the first modern total war, a war involving all of the people and a complete commitment of all the nation's resources; a war without compromise or any limitation on its objectives.[44] In the end, Lincoln, having tested many of

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[43]Lincoln to Herndon, February 15, 1848, ibid., 451-52.

[44]Williams, Americans at War, 55.

the outer reaches of his constitutional grants of authority, emerged in the role of "emergency dictator," in effective control of a mighty military arsenal.[45]

With the fall of Fort Sumter on April 14, 1861, Lincoln began immediately to employ his emergency powers. The effect of his actions will be to make the commander in chief clause "one of the most highly-charged provisions of the Constitution."[46] The President called for a special session of the Congress to convene on July 4, 1861. But in the ten-week interim, Lincoln took steps that represent "perhaps the widest use of unilateral Presidential power without prior congressional sanction."[47]

Lincoln, basing his actions on the commander in chief clause of the Constitution as well as the clause instructing him "to take care that the laws be faithfully

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[45]Robert A. Dahl, Pluralist Democracy in the United States: Conflict and Consent (Chicago: Rand, McNally, 1967), 96. Hereinafter cited as Dahl, Pluralist Democracy. The term, "dictator," is used here only to indicate the extent of Lincoln's powers and the absence of any efficacious method of dividing the decisive powers with Congress. Lincoln's actions were justified by the emergency condition. While he often acted without statutory authority, the Congress willingly, ex post facto, provided the President with the legislative sanctions. Lincoln was a democratic ruler, granted a dictatorial range of powers as an expedient. Had he been a dictator in truth, he would not have submitted to a popular election in 1864.

[46]Corwin, The President, 229.

[47]Background Information on the Use of United States Armed Forces in Foreign Countries, 18.

executed," began by issuing a presidential proclamation on April 15, 1861, calling the militia into Federal service and demanding an end to insurrection.[48] In the weeks remaining before Congress convened, Lincoln ordered several extraordinary measures which he deemed necessary:

> During this period of ten weeks Lincoln amalgamated the available state militias into a ninety days' volunteer force, called 40,000 volunteers for three years' service, added 23,000 men to the Regular Army and 18,000 to the Navy, paid out two millions from unappropriated funds in the Treasury to persons unauthorized to receive it, closed the Post Office to "treasonable correspondence," subjected passengers to and from foreign countries to new passport regulations, proclaimed a blockade of the Southern ports, suspended the writ of habeas corpus in various places, and caused the arrest and military detention of persons "who were represented to him" as being engaged in or contemplating "treasonable practices"--and all this for the most part without the least statutory authorization.[49]

When Congress was assembled on July 4, it heard a

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[48]Dahl, Pluralist Democracy, 96; Paul M. Angle and Earl S. Miers (eds.), The Living Lincoln: The Man, His Mind, His Times, And the War He Fought, Reconstructed From His Own Writings (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1955), 395-96.

[49]Corwin, The President, 229. Similar lists, varying only in detail, can be found in OCMH, American Military History, 189-90; Background Information on the Use of United States Armed Forces in Foreign Countries, 18; Edward S. Corwin and Louis W. Koenig, The Presidency Today (New York: New York University Press, 1956), 32. Hereinafter cited as Corwin and Koenig, Presidency Today. See also, T. Harry Williams, Lincoln and His Generals (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952), 7. Hereinafter cited as Williams, Lincoln and His Generals.

powerful defense of his conduct by Lincoln[50] and soon after passed a series of statutes authorizing the emergency actions taken by the President.[51] But this does not diminish the fact that Lincoln had acted unilaterally and boldly, establishing a number of precedents to guide future chief executives. The belated congressional sanction of these steps was little more than a gesture of approval, albeit significant for the future. It is not really noteworthy that Lincoln - or the other wartime presidents - did not face any considerable opposition to the use, or usurpation, of the war powers. During times of national emergency the Congress has quite freely transferred its war powers to the commander in chief, for a fixed period of time, or the duration of the emergency. "Congress too, likes to win wars," Clinton Rossiter has pointed out, "and Congressmen are more likely to needle the President for inactivity and timidity than to accuse him of acting too swiftly and arbitrarily."[52]

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[50]Lincoln, Message to Congress in Special Session, July 4, 1861, Basler (ed.), Collected Works of Lincoln, IV, 421-41.

[51]Corwin and Koenig, Presidency Today, 32-33; Background Information on the Use of United States Armed Forces in Foreign Countries, 18.

[52]Clinton Rossiter, The American Presidency (New York: New American Library of World Literature, 1956), 18. Hereinafter cited as Rossiter, American Presidency.

During the first three years of the fighting Lincoln did more than just determine policy and general strategy. He decided theater and campaign strategies and, on occasion, developed and directed tactical maneuvers of forces in the field. He did so out of necessity, for he felt the ranking generals in the command structure had talents ranging from ineptness and timidity to gross incompetency. When Lincoln found - in Ulysses Grant - a soldier superbly capable of commanding armies in war, he turned over most tactical and strategic direction to his new commanding general, which is not to infer that Lincoln relinquished his authority to Grant. The President did allow Grant a great deal of command latitude, but only because Grant conformed his tactics to the President's strategic concepts.[53]

Lincoln apparently believed and acted on the assumption that his emergency powers as commander in chief were sufficient for all situations produced by the Civil War. While he did work with and through the Congress as a general rule, he apparently felt no impelling obligation to wait for congressional authorization or for the judiciary's blessings, if he believed conditions dictated otherwise. This fundamental assumption of power was the

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[53]Williams, Lincoln and His Generals, 8-9, 305-6.

underlying policy upon which Lincoln's war administration was predicated.[54] Lincoln's own words can be used to support this contention. The most obvious example is his oft-quoted remark to the Congress in defense of his suspension of habeas corpus: ". . . are all the laws, but one, to go unexecuted, and the government itself to go to pieces, lest that one be violated?"[55] Again, in August, 1863, Lincoln replied to a critic who demanded retraction of the Emancipation Proclamation by saying, "You say it is unconstitutional--I think differently. I think the constitution invests its commander-in-chief with the law of war, in time of war."[56] Finally, in an explicit statement on his concept of his role, Lincoln wrote:

> I did understand . . . that my oath to preserve the constitution to the best of my ability, imposed upon me the duty of preserving, by every indispensable means, that government--that nation--of which that constitution was the organic law. . . . I felt that measures, otherwise unconstitutional, might become lawful, by becoming indispensable to the preservation of the nation. Right or wrong, I assume this ground, and now avow it.[57]

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[54]William Archibald Dunning, Truth in History and Other Essays (New York: Columbia University Press, 1937), 165-66.

[55]Lincoln, Message to Congress in Special Session, July 4, 1861, Basler (ed.), Collected Works of Lincoln, IV, 430; Fowler, War Powers of the President, 17.

[56]Lincoln to James C. Conkling, August 26, 1863, Basler (ed.), Collected Works of Lincoln, VI, 408.

[57]Lincoln to Albert G. Hodges, April 4, 1874, ibid., VII, 281.

The story of America's brief involvement in war with Spain is a well-worn tale of gross inefficiency in the command and logistical systems of the War Department, blundering victories and an anti-climax in the Philippines full of savage brutality. What is curious about this story is that William McKinley is not the central character. Whereas the history of the Civil War invariably revolves around the compelling, tragic figure in the White House, McKinley seems somehow a minor actor in the accounts of America's experiment in imperialism.

The President did not lead the nation into war: McKinley yielded to jingoistic pressures generated by expansionists desirous of emulating England's imperialistic successes as well as a deep popular idealistic impulse to aid the Cuban people. Nor did he openly direct the military efforts of the country during the war. At the outset, McKinley ". . . had only hazy notions of what kind of war he wanted to fight."[58] The President was constantly urged to expand America's military effort, particularly by the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs. However no clear-cut, overall strategy can be perceived at any point in the war. Instead, McKinley apparently worked from day-to-day, not neglecting his duty to make the

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[58]Ernest R. May, "McKinley," in May (ed.), Ultimate Decision, 95.

ultimate decisions when need be, but not achieving any effective unity of command either.[59]

In fairness to McKinley, he did choose to work behind the scenes; quite often, his major function was to act as a mediator and liaison between the War and Navy Departments. Since these sessions were confidential, little can be determined about the President's role. Additionally, McKinley was not given to making direct public statements about the war: "A captain who stayed on duty at the helm, without a message to the frightened and indignant passengers."[60] Perhaps the only reasonable conclusion regarding this President as commander in chief is that arrived at by Margaret Leech: "McKinley's actual contribution is impossible to evaluate."[61]

Few students of American history, asked to name a great national leader in time of war, would be likely to invoke the name of William McKinley, or the next wartime leader, Woodrow Wilson. The popular image of Wilson is not that of a great commander in chief, but of an impractical moralist who fumbled his country into war and bungled the peace that ended it. Quite soon after taking

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[59] Ibid., 96-103, passim.

[60] Margaret Leech, In the Days of McKinley (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959), 232-33.

[61] Ibid., 233.

office Wilson had ordered a military expedition to attack and occupy Vera Cruz, Mexico, without requesting congressional authorization. He later ordered a punitive military expedition into northern Mexico in a vain pursuit of Pancho Villa. In 1917, Wilson asked the nation to take up arms in the most horrible war mankind had yet inflicted upon itself.[62] All of this caused Wilson a great deal of anguish, for of all American presidents, none was a more avowed pacifist.[63]

The decisions that Wilson made as commander in chief are few in number and can be briefly summarized: The first was that the American Expeditionary Force was not to be amalgamated into the Allied armies, but was to maintain a separate identity. Thus, the United States became in World War I, not one of the Allied Powers, but an "Associated Belligerent." Another early decision was that the United States would concentrate its military contribution in France, the major theater of the war. Neither of these decisions originated with Wilson. He simply approved

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[62]Richard F. Haynes, "Woodrow Wilson as Commander in Chief in World War I," Unpublished Master's Thesis, Louisiana State University (1963), 212-13. Hereinafter cited as Haynes, "Wilson as Commander in Chief."

[63]Richard Hofstadter, The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It (New York: Vintage, 1954), 260. Hereinafter cited as Hofstadter, American Political Tradition.

both of them after they had been recommended to him by the War Department General Staff and the Secretary of War.[64] Wilson also approved of the Allied Supreme War Council's appointment of Ferdinand Foch as supreme commander of the Allied armies, thus subordinating the American commander, General John J. Pershing, to foreign authority. The only other command decision of any consequence made by Wilson was his decision to permit American troop participation in the military interventions at Vladivostok and Murmansk-Archangel in the Soviet Union. In this decision he ran counter to the advice of General Pershing and Secretary of War Newton Baker, but in almost every other instance he accepted their proposals, ". . . deliberately evading the necessity for making military decisions."[65]

In sum, it must be said that Woodrow Wilson, while never completely abdicating his military functions, did avoid acting as commander in chief whenever it was possible for him to do so. One writer has suggested that perhaps Wilson "evaded duty as Commander-in-Chief in order to do

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[64]Louis Smith, American Democracy and Military Power: A Study of the Military Power in the United States (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 51. Hereinafter cited as Smith, American Democracy and Military Power. See also, Haynes, "Wilson as Commander in Chief," 218.

[65]Ernest R. May, "Wilson," in May (ed.), Ultimate Decision, 129.

his larger duty as President of the United States."[66] There is validity to this, for Wilson clearly considered the direction of military forces to be a distasteful task that could be safely delegated to his functionaries. He had a messianic sense of mission in which he conceived his chief responsibility to be the making of peace, not the waging of war.

The next wartime commander in chief, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, "who had read about Lincoln and lived with Wilson,"[67] was the political heir of the Lincolnian tradition of an autocratic commander in chief. It was Roosevelt who ". . . carried the wartime Presidency to breathtaking heights of authority over the American economy and social order."[68]

A confluence of vast technological advancements and congressional acquiescence served to elevate FDR to these "breathtaking heights" of power. Even before the first of

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[66] Ibid., 131.

[67] Rossiter, American Presidency, 18. Franklin Roosevelt had served as Wilson's Assistant Secretary of the Navy in World War I. As President, he wrote to Joseph Tumulty, Wilson's former secretary: "I wonder if you realize how often I think of your Old Chief when I go about my daily tasks. Perhaps what we are doing will go a little way towards the fulfillment of his ideals." Quoted in Thomas H. Greer, What Roosevelt Thought: The Social and Political Ideas of Franklin D. Roosevelt (East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1958), 105.

[68] Rossiter, American Presidency, 18.

the world wars the American industrial revolution had created such refinements in military weaponry that domestic industry itself became, according to Edward Corwin, ". . . an industrial theater of war of immense proportions."[69] Corwin goes on to explain, convincingly, that . . .

> Great industry in the United States had . . . become part and parcel of the fighting forces not only of the United States but of its allies as well, and as such it had to be subjected to detailed regimentation by the government. . . . To meet this requirement Congress was compelled to develop a new technique in legislative practice, one capable of meeting the fluctuating demands of a fluid war situation. This it did by delegating vast unchanneled powers to the President, to be exercised by him through men of his own choosing. John Locke's ban on delegated legislation simply went by the board, nor has it since been revived so far as concerns powers shared by the two departments.[70]

Wilson had employed this delegated legislation to create extremely powerful administrative agencies responsible only to him.[71] Roosevelt, confronted with a far larger war, involving vast technological changes, built upon World War I precedents so that "the quasi-legislative powers of Franklin Roosevelt as

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[69]Corwin and Koenig, Presidency Today, 33.

[70]Ibid.

[71]Among these agencies were, U.S. Shipping Board, Council of National Defense, Committee on Public Information, War Industries Board, Fuel Administration, Food Administration, Railroad Administration, National War Labor Board and the War Finance Corporation.

'Commander-in-Chief in wartime,' to use his own favorite formula, burgeoned correspondingly."[72]

In his preparedness moves prior to American involvement, Roosevelt expanded the historical definition of the commander in chief function. On September 8, 1939, the President issued a proclamation declaring the country to be in a state of "limited national emergency." Under the authority of this proclamation Roosevelt increased the National Guard by 35,000 and the Army by 17,000 over prior limits. This cautious early step was, Roosevelt felt, about all he could do in view of the prevailing isolationist sentiment.[73] As this isolationist spirit withered in the face of Axis advances into Scandanavia and the Low Countries of Europe in early 1940, Roosevelt was able to move more boldly. In an earlier budget message to Congress in January, the President had requested $1.8 billion for national defense and asked for $1.18 billion in additional military appropriations. On May 31, 1940, he requested a supplementary appropriation of $1.27 billion

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[72]Corwin and Koenig, Presidency Today, 34.

[73]Walter Millis, Arms and Men: A Study of American Military History (New York: New American Library, 1956), 245. Hereinafter cited as Millis, Arms and Men.

to accelerate old, and develop new, military programs.[74]

In June, 1940, on Prime Minister Churchill's request, Roosevelt ordered the War Department to release to Great Britain "surplus or outdated" rifles, planes and other military hardware. In this busy summer of 1940, FDR also dispatched American technicians and military advisers to England. He allowed British pilots to be trained and British warships to be repaired in the United States. And on September 2, 1940, the Administration concluded an executive agreement with England called the "Destroyer-Bases" deal. By its terms, fifty "outdated" (but recently reconditioned) naval warships were transfered to English control in return for the leasing to the United States of sites for military bases on British possessions.[75] "The deal was an abandonment of any pretense of neutrality. It was an act of war. . . ."[76]

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[74]Richard B. Morris, Encyclopedia of American History (rev. ed., New York: Harper and Row, 1961), 364. Hereinafter cited as Morris, Encyclopedia of American History.

[75]The naval and air bases provided by Great Britain on a ninety-nine year lease arrangement were located in Newfoundland, the Bahamas, Bermuda, Jamaica, St. Lucia, Antigua, Trinidad, and British Guiana. See John E. Wiltz, From Isolation to War, 1931-1941 (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1968), 81. Hereinafter cited as Wiltz, From Isolation to War.

[76]Ibid., 82. See also, Corwin, The President, 202.

Roosevelt further compromised the quasi-neutral posture of the United States in securing the enactment of H.R. 1776, the Lend-Lease Act of March, 1941. By its terms the President could, whenever he believed "national defense" to be involved, authorize his administrators to procure and "sell, transfer, exchange, lease, lend or otherwise dispose of the same to any government whose defense the President deemed vital" to United States security, on whatever terms he cared to set.[77] The Commander in Chief now had power over and control of the dispersal of all arms and munitions manufactured in the United States as well as control over all its armed forces. He was the most powerful single human being in the world. Edward S. Corwin rightly states with respect to the Lend-Lease Act that "no more sweeping delegation of legislative power has ever been made to an American president. . . ."[78]

A good case can be made that American participation in World War II was inevitable. But such an argument does not justify the propriety of the destroyer-bases deal and the Lend-Lease Act. The former was an executive caveat,

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[77]Corwin and Koenig, Presidency Today, 35. See also, Dahl, Pluralist Democracy, 96; Selig Adler, The Uncertain Giant; 1921-1941: American Foreign Policy Between the Wars (Toronto, Canada: Collier-Macmillan, 1965), 249-51.

[78]Corwin, The President, 237.

exercising the commander in chief powers to determine future foreign relations and military alignments.[79] The latter represented a sweeping abdication of military responsibility by the Congress, giving the commander in chief extremely broad controls over an America still (technically) at peace.[80] The opponents of Lend-Lease recognized this and argued in vain that the act changed and distorted the traditional commander in chief theory. As Senator Burton Wheeler expressed it, "the proponents of this bill . . . are proclaiming a new constitutional theory which places the actual power to involve our country in war at the uncontrolled discretion of the Executive."[81]

Roosevelt's direct command of the military during World War II was affected by his issuance of a formal Military Order in July, 1939. The order removed from the service departments the Joint Army-Navy Board and a number of procurement agencies and placed them in the Executive Office of the President. Among other things,

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[79] James, Contemporary Presidency, 146.

[80] Corwin and Koenig, Presidency Today, 34-35; Millis, Arms and Men, 249-51; Wiltz, From Isolation to War, 1931-1941, 85-87. See also, Powers of the President to Send Armed Forces Outside the United States, 16.

[81] Senator Wheeler is quoted in an undated report, "Power of the President to Send Troops Abroad, (Appendix D)," Murphy Papers, White House Files, Truman Library.

this order had the effect of placing the Chief of Naval Operations and the Chief of Staff of the Army, directly under the command and supervision of the commander in chief:

> The immediate results of this new arrangement were modest but significant. The principal war agencies in both the strategic and the production fields were clearly established as presidential, not departmental, agencies. . . . The Military Order of 1939 had the effect of raising the Joint Board above the departmental level. By placing the chiefs in a special relationship to the President, it made them in some way independent of their immediate civilian superiors. . . . Increasingly after 1939 the Joint Board, under the control of the President, concerned itself with questions of national rather than service strategy. . . .
>
> By this little-noticed Military Order of 1939, Franklin Roosevelt laid the institutional foundations of his powers as commander in chief. The new arrangements were not a model of administrative symmetry. . . . In particular the service secretaries were placed in an anomalous position; they retained control over, and responsibility for, their departments but not their military chieftains, who, with their advisers, operated directly beneath the President. If the service secretaries were indeed the principal agents of civilian control over the military, it would seem that in strategic matters the chiefs, as Admiral Leahy was to remark at the end of the war, were "under no civilian control whatever," apart, of course, from that exercised by the President himself.[82]

Despite FDR's own unsystematic and often haphazard style of leadership he found his command authority highly institutionalized by the very vastness of the military structure he had to command. Roosevelt discovered that even the commander in chief could have little direct effect

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[82]William R. Emerson, "Roosevelt," in May (ed.), Ultimate Decision, 136-37. Hereinafter cited as Emerson, "Roosevelt."

on the machinery of command in such a vast undertaking. Nor was there much need to. He set the grand strategy of the war with his Joint Chiefs, with whom he maintained a personal, amiable relationship, and they implemented it throughout the command structure. Because the system worked, Roosevelt did not involve himself in operational planning, nor did he attempt to dictate tactics to the theater commanders. While for a time in the midst of the war FDR doubted the strategic advice of his Joint Chiefs, leaning more toward politically-oriented Allied proposals, he soon relented, relying generally upon his military planners to determine strategy.[83] William R. Emerson, in an essay on Roosevelt as war leader, came to this fitting conclusion:

> . . . he performed truly the function of the American commander in chief, which is to bind together the varied political and military strands which make up war, keeping each in its proper relation to the whole. If criticism must fall upon his war presidency it probably should fall upon the soundness and realism of his political motives rather than upon his military actions.[84]

On April 12, 1945, with victory in Europe a certainty, but the war in the Pacific still far from over, Franklin Roosevelt died of a massive cerebral hemorrhage.

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[83] *New York Times*, April 13, 1945; Maurice Matloff, "Roosevelt as War Leader," in Abraham S. Eisenstadt (ed.), *American History: Recent Interpretations, Book II, Since 1865*, 2nd ed. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1969), 425-26.

[84] Emerson, "Roosevelt," 176.

And so, with a brutal suddenness, the Vice-President found himself in full command of the most powerful military apparatus the earth has ever known.

## CHAPTER II

## FROM THE MISSOURI TO THE POTOMAC

> One thing I am certain about, there's nothing in our history . . . that shows that a man can be trained to be President of the United States, or that we could ensure that he would ever become President even if trained for the job, because there are so many factors that enter into the making of a President.[1]

Harry S. Truman was born in Lamar, Missouri, May 8, 1884. His early years fit the American stereotype: Born of solid, rural, middle-class, Midwestern, Protestant stock, his youth was spent on a six hundred-acre farm, and in Independence, an unexceptional small town near Kansas City. His early life was uneventful, full of those minor tribulations and small victories that characterize the background of most Americans. If Harry Truman was anything, he was "average," showing no particular abilities or special promise.[2]

Truman's family could not afford to send him to college. He did apply for admission to the United States

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[1]Harry S. Truman, Mr. Citizen (New York: Popular Library, 1961), 111. Hereinafter cited as Truman, Mr. Citizen.

[2]Luther Huston, New York Times, April 15, 1945; Harry S. Truman, Year of Decisions, Vol. I, Memoirs (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Incorporated, 1955), 112-25, passim. Hereinafter cited as Truman, Memoirs, I.

Military Academy (West Point) and passed the entrance examinations, only to be rejected for his poor eyesight.[3] Although his schooling ended with his high school graduation, Truman remained an avid, life-long student of history and government. However, he regretted his lack of formal training: "I've always been sorry I did not get a university education. But I got it in the Army the hard way--and it stuck."[4] Truman's first job after high school was as a timekeeper for a railroad construction crew. He went from that to bank clerking, and, in 1916, became a one-third partner in the Atlas-Okla Oil Lands Syndicate, a wildcat drilling company. Because of manpower shortages brought on by World War I, the company sold off all its leases at the outset of the war.[5]

The future commander in chief got his first taste of the military life in 1905. As he wrote in his Memoirs, ". . . having been something of a student of military

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[3]John Hersey, "Profiles--Mr. President," Part 2, "Ten O'Clock Meeting," The New Yorker, XXVII (April 14, 1951), 38. Hereinafter cited as Hersey, "Profiles," Pt. 2.

[4]Alfred Steinberg, The Man From Missouri: The Life and Times of Harry S. Truman (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1962), 51. Hereinafter cited as Steinberg, Man From Missouri.

[5]Irving Brant, "Harry S. Truman-I," New Republic CXII (April 30, 1945), 578. Hereinafter cited as Brant, "Harry S. Truman-I." See also, Truman, Memoirs, I, 126-27. In March, 1917, Atlas-Okla was re-organized as Morgan Oil and Refining Company.

history, I decided to join the 'militia' referred to in Washington's message of 1790."[6] So he enlisted in Battery B of the National Guard at Kansas City in the year it was organized. In his first National Guard encampment at Cape Giradeau, Missouri, Truman was a private, acting as "No. 2 man" on a three-inch gun.[7] He remained in the Guard until activated for federal service in 1917.

With American entry into the First World War the Kansas City-Independence National Guard batteries were expanded into a full regiment. In the fashion of the time, Guard officers were elected by the members of the regiment following this re-organization; and Truman found himself elected a first lieutenant of light artillery in Battery F of the 2nd Missouri Field Artillery. Three months later, in August, 1917, Truman's unit was sworn into federal service as the 129th Field Artillery of the 35th Division. The unit was activated and ordered to Camp Doniphan, Fort Sill, Oklahoma on September 26, 1917.[8]

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[6]Harry S. Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, Vol. II, Memoirs (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1956), 46. Hereinafter cited as Truman, Memoirs, II.

[7]Ibid., I, 125.

[8]Ibid., 127-28; Steinberg, Man From Missouri, 42. See also, Jonathan Daniels, The Man of Independence (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1950), 90. Hereinafter cited as Daniels, Man of Independence.

After training in Oklahoma, Truman was shipped to France in March, 1918. In France he received more training in Artillery schools at Montigny-sur-Aube and Coetiquidan. On July 11 Truman, by now a captain, was given command of Battery D, 129th Field Artillery, in the Vosges Mountains. He fired his first combat barrage there on September 6, 1918. From then until the Armistice in November, Captain Truman commanded his unit at St. Mihiel, the Meuse-Argonne, Varennes, Verdun and Metz.[9]

Truman referred to these months of combat many times during his later career, always with a mixture of pride and nostalgia as, for example, in a radio address he broadcast to all the Armed Forces following FDR's death:

> I have done as you would do in the field when the Commander falls. My duties and responsibilities are clear. I have assumed them. These duties will be carried on in keeping with our American tradition.
>
> As a veteran of the First World War, I have seen death on the battlefield. When I fought in France with the 35th Division, I saw good officers and men fall, and be replaced. . . .
>
> I know the strain, the mud, the misery, the utter weariness of the soldier in the field. And I know

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[9]New York Times, April 13, 1945; Truman, Memoirs, I, 128-31. See also, Cabell Phillips, The Truman Presidency: The History of a Triumphant Succession (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966), 13. Hereinafter cited as Phillips, Truman Presidency.

> too his courage, his stamina, his faith in his comrades, his country, and himself.
> We are depending on every one of you. . . .[10]

Following his return to Missouri after the war, Truman continued his interest in the military by reamining active in the Field Artillery Reserve, in which he attained the rank of major. In addition, he was instrumental in creating the first chapter in Missouri of the Reserve Officers Association, at Kansas City in 1921. Later, when the organization had spread across Missouri, he became the first president of the state-wide association.[11]

"My whole political career," Truman would say many years later, "(was) . . . based upon my war service and war associates."[12] This was certainly true of its beginnings: Truman had opened a haberdashery at Kansas City in 1919 with a friend from the war days, ex-sergeant Eddie Jacobson. Following a successful initial year, the business went downhill, after--as Truman put it in his own partisan fashion--". . . the Republicans took over the U.S.

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[10]Address Broadcast to the Armed Forces, April 17, 1945, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Harry S. Truman: Containing the Public Messages, Speeches, and Statements of the President (8 vols., Washington, USGPO, 1961-66), 1945, 14. Hereinafter cited as Public Papers . . . Truman, (year). See also, Truman, Memoirs, I, 51-52.

[11]Truman, Memoirs, I, 138-39.

[12]Phillips, Truman Presidency, 14.

Government under the presidency of Warren G. Harding."[13] In the spring of 1922, with his business at the point of bankruptcy, Truman was urged by Jim Pendergast to seek election as county judge. Pendergast had served with Truman as an officer in the 129th and later commanded his own battery in the 130th Field Artillery. His father was Michael J. Pendergast, who, with his brother Tom, ruled the political machine that controlled Kansas City and Jackson County. In a meeting of the Pendergast organization Truman won support for his candidacy. Mike Pendergast secured the endorsement for him, according to Truman, by arguing that he was a veteran and one of the few officers "whose men didn't want to shoot him."[14]

Truman won the race for country judge in 1922, but lost his bid for re-election in 1924, the only defeat in his political career. In 1926 he ran for "presiding judge" of Jackson County and won by the substantial margin of sixteen thousand votes.[15] Four years later, by a far wider margin of fifty-eight thousand votes, Truman was

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[13]Truman, Memoirs, I, 133-34.

[14]Ibid., 136; Daniels, Man of Independence, 113-14. For a somewhat different version of these events, see Phillips, Truman Presidency, 15-16.

[15]Truman, Memoirs, I, 139; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 17. In Missouri, County judges are actually administrators, performing a function similar to that of county boards of supervisors in other states.

re-elected to his judgeship. His energetic program of road-building, hospital and courthouse construction had apparently won him the support of the voters as well as the Pendergast machine.[16]

In 1934, as his term came to an end, Truman considered running for county collector, governor or congressman from the newly-created Fourth Congressional District of eastern Jackson County. But "Boss" Pendergast, for political reasons of his own, insisted that Truman run for the Senate. Although his chances were very slim, Truman agreed. It would have been an exercise in utter futility for a Democrat to seek any of the other posts Truman had considered running for, without the blessings of the Kansas City machine.[17]

In the Democratic primary Truman faced two experienced Congressmen, John Cochran of St. Louis and Jacob Milligan of Richmond. He won by a plurality of some forty-four thousand votes. In the general election, Truman opposed the incumbent, Roscoe C. Patterson, a conservative Republican from Springfield. Despite the fact that he was running with the endoresement of Tom Pendergast,

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[16]Luther Huston, New York Times, April 15, 1945; Truman, Memoirs, I, 140; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 17.

[17]Truman, Memoirs, I, 141. See also, Huston, New York Times, April 15, 1945; Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 113-14.

who was often anti-Roosevelt, Truman campaigned on a pro-New Deal platform. He took the Senate seat from Patterson with a 254,000 vote majority.[18]

During his senatorial campaigns and in his first months in the Senate, Truman was villified as a "messenger boy" for Pendergast and, later, as "the Senator from Pendergast." The Pendergast machine had become nationally infamous for its brazen election frauds and use of brutality, intimidation, kidnapping and murder to achieve its ends. Yet Truman was able to shake the onus of this association for--to the amazement of his political opponents--he was absolutely honest in his personal and public conduct. Despite intensive digging by many, no shred of evidence has ever been unearthed to discredit Truman's conduct in office.[19] Cabell Phillips, a

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[18]"I was a New Dealer from the start," Truman wrote. "In fact, had been a New Dealer back in Jackson County. . . . I believed in the program from the time it was first proposed." Memoirs, I, 141, 149. See also, Phillips, Truman Presidency, 24; Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 120.

[19]Irving Brant, "Harry S. Truman-I," 577; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 18-19, 24-25; Daniels, Man of Independence, 165-66. Nowhere is it more evident thatTruman's image was not permanently tarnished by his alliance with the Kansas City machine than in a Times editorial following his assumption of the Presidency: "There is no need to blink at the one-time association with Pendergast," the editorial reads. The writer describes Truman as a "practical politician" who, like Al Smith, was educated in ". . . the hard, tough schools of the ward machines . . . whose experience in the practical ways of accomplishing sound public purposes . . . (make) them particularly useful to their country in a time of crisis." New York Times, April 14, 1945.

biographer of Truman, sees this contradiction as political pragmatism:

> One of the most fascinating anomalies of Harry Truman's career is that he, a man of such impeccable personal honesty and political integrity, could have maintained so close a relationship and dependence upon the Pendergast machine without being corrupted by it. . . . But Truman's political enemies, as well as more objective students, have combed through the records time after time and not found one substantial clue of Truman's complicity in any of its myriad misdeeds.
>
> Moralists will find it difficult to exculpate Harry Truman while condemning the machine of which he was a part. To Truman himself there was no paradox in his relationship with the Pendergasts. He understood the nature of organization politics and the code of loyalty by which it survives. . . . So he did what many another smart political comer has done: He rode the machine as far as it would take him but kept his hands clean along the way. That is a pragmatic rather than a moralistic philosophy, but under the rules of our political system it is what pays off.[20]

Though it would have been politically expedient to disavow his connections with Tom Pendergast once in the Senate, particularly after the machine was crushed in the late '30's, Truman remained loyal to the man who put him in office, while always voting his own way. As Truman himself put it, "Tom Pendergast never asked me to do a dishonest deed. . . . He was always my friend. He was always honest with me, and when he made a promise he kept it."[21]

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[20]Phillips, Truman Presidency, 18, 20.

[21]Time, XLI, (March 8, 1943), 15. See also, Brant, "Harry S. Truman-I," 577-78; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 18.

Truman's first term in the Senate was unmarked by any particular contribution. As a freshman senator he accepted the rules of the club, remaining quietly in the background, voting generally with the administration. Truman was a typical New Deal Democrat, "who combined the party regularity of the older Democrats with the liberal fervor of the older progressives. . . ."[22]

Truman's value to the Roosevelt Administration was not recognized. FDR ignored him, giving all of the patronage for Missouri to the senior Senator, Bennett Champ Clark, who often voted against New Deal measures.[23] With the Pendergast machine destroyed and without the support of the President or any substantial power bloc back in Missouri, Truman's prospects for re-election in 1940 were extremely gloomy. His campaign was not made any easier by having to face two tough challengers for his seat, Governor Lloyd C. Stark, FDR's personal choice, and Maurice Milligan, the crusading United States District

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[22]Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., The Coming of the New Deal (Vol. II of The Age of Roosevelt. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1957-60), 554. Truman was assigned to the Interstate Commerce and Appropriations Committees. He regretted not being assigned to Military Affairs: "Ever since World War I, I had maintained an active interest in the Army and its administration, and I would have welcomed an assignment to the Military AffairsCommittee." (He was in his second term.) Truman, Memoirs, I, 147-48.

[23]Brant, "Harry S. Truman-I," 578-79.

Attorney for Kansas City, who had led the investigation that exposed and destroyed the Pendergast machine. Additionally, the only newspaper of any size in all of Missouri to endorse the candidacy of Harry Truman was the Kansas City Journal.[24]

Despite the odds, Truman won the 1940 Democratic primary by a margin of less than eight thousand votes in a triumph as surprising and unpredictable as his upset presidential victory eight years later. In the general election, Truman had a relatively easy time of it, defeating Manvelle Davis, the Republican nominee.[25] Now he could return to the Senate free of any labels, for he had clearly won in his own right.

In January 1941, as Truman's second term began in the Senate, the Roosevelt Administration was pushing its military preparedness program in earnest. Through his membership on the Senate Appropriations Committee, Truman was intimately aware that billions of dollars were rapidly being expended under contract to manufacturers for the production of war material. Besides these defense expenditures, the Administration requested an additional

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[24]Truman, Memoirs, I, 159-61. See also, Brant, "Harry S. Truman-I," 579; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 29-31.

[25]Truman, Memoirs, I, 160-2. See also, Time, XLI, (March 8, 1943), 14; Daniels, Man of Independence, 210.

four billion to expand the Army and seven billion dollars for aid to England. The total additional appropriations for the first few months of 1941 exceeded $25 billion.[26] During his campaign he had heard tales of gross inefficiency and mismanagement of government contracts. As the rumors of waste, corruption and favoritism continued to pile up, Truman decided to conduct his own investigation. Traveling in his car, he drove down the eastern seaboard from Maryland to Florida, across the Gulf Coast to Texas, northward through Oklahoma and Nebraska to Wisconsin and Michigan, and back to Washington. In all, he covered about thirty thousand miles: "I visited war camps, defense plants, and other establishments and projects which had some connection with the total war effort of the country, and did not let any of them know who I was."[27] His personal odyssey confirmed the rumors and convinced him of the need for a public watchdog over these vast expenditures.

On February 10, 1941, Truman made a speech

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[26] Truman, Memoirs, I, 164-65.

[27] Ibid., 165. See also, Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 180-81; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 33-34. Commenting in a 1950 interview, Truman said: ". . . I came back and set up the Truman Committee. If I hadn't taken that drive, I'd still be just Senator Truman instead of being in all this fix." John Hersey, "Profiles--Mr. President," Part 1, "Quite a Head of Steam," The New Yorker, XXVII (April 7, 1951), 45. Hereinafter cited as Hersey, "Profiles," Pt. 1.

denouncing the methods for awarding defense contracts, condemning the concentration of these awards among a few large manufacturers and citing several abuses by corporations, particularly in "cost-plus" contracts. Truman proposed Senate Resolution 71, calling for a five-member committee to investigate the national defense program on a budget of twenty-five thousand dollars.[28] Truman's timing was excellent: A similar resolution had just been offered in the House by a Congressman bitterly hostile to the administration.[29] Roosevelt, with the encouragement of Senator James F. Byrnes, chairman of the committee to which Truman's resolution had been referred, decided to support the Senate investigation headed by a consistent loyalist. After considerable haggling and in-fighting, Truman was named chairman of the Special Committee to Investigate the National Defense Program. The bipartisan membership was raised to seven from the five Truman had proposed and the appropriation reduced from twenty-five to fifteen thousand. Both changes were forced on Truman by Byrnes, who wanted to prevent the committee from becoming powerful enough to hamper or embarrass the Administration.[30]

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[28]Truman, Memoirs, I, 165-66. See also, Phillips, Truman Presidency, 34; Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 181-82.

[29]Eugene Cox of Georgia.

[30]Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 182; Truman, Memoirs, I, 166. See also, Phillips, Truman Presidency, 34; Luther Huston, New York Times, April 15, 1945.

Truman was concerned about the role his committee was to play. He had been granted a broad franchise by the Senate to investigate every phase of military spending, but he was determined to avoid interfering in policy or strategy decisions, which he firmly believed were the sole province of the Chief Executive. "The Special committee never discussed military strategy, although we took testimony from many generals and admirals," Truman wrote in his Memoirs, adding, "the military policy of the United States was entrusted to the President and the Joint Chiefs of Staff and not to any congressional committee."[31] He recalled, too, that on several occasions other senators, usually Republicans like Robert Taft, Oren Brewster and Arthur Vandenberg, tried to convert the Truman Committee into something resembling the Committee on the Conduct of the War which bedeviled Abraham Lincoln in his exercise of the war powers.[32] "Thank goodness," Truman said, "I knew my history and I wouldn't do it."[33]

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[31]Truman, Memoirs, I, 189.

[32]Ibid.; Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 184. A few months prior to U.S. entry into World War II and shortly after entry, resolutions were offered in Congress to create a "joint committee on the conduct of national defense." Both efforts were blocked by the Democrats, who argued that military policy matters must reside with the President. A. Russell Buchanan, The United States and World War II (2 Vols. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1964), II, 314-15. Hereinafter cited as Buchanan, United States and World War II.

[33]Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 184.

The history of congressional/presidential relations during the Civil War was known to Truman long before he entered the Senate from his avid reading of military history. However, when he became head of the special committee, he borrowed the Reports of the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War from the Library of Congress, studied them carefully, and came to this conclusion:

> These historic records constitute a most interesting set of documents. That committee of the Union Congress was said by Douglas Southall Freeman, the biographer of Robert E. Lee, to have been of material assistance to the Confederacy. I became familiar with its mistakes and was determined to avoid the same errors in the conduct of my special committee. Here, as in many other instances, I found the teachings of history to be valuable in my own approach to current problems.[34]

Cautioned by his knowledge of historical precedent, Truman established rigid guidelines within which his committee operated. Truman functioned as a "chief of staff," firmly guiding the committee, but freely delegating responsibility. He made the committee apolitical by insisting that all reports submitted to Congress by its bipartisan membership had to be unanimous.

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[34]Truman, Memoirs, I, 168, 188-89; Truman Speaks, 38. See also, Daniels, Man of Independence, 217-18; Irving Brant, "Harry S. Truman-II," New Republic, CXII (May 7, 1945), 635. Hereinafter cited as Brant, "Harry S. Truman-II." William Hillman (ed.), Mr. President: The First Publication from the Personal Diaries, Private Letters, Papers and Revealing Interviews of Harry S. Truman, Thirty-Second President of the United States of America (New York: Farrar, Straus and Young, 1952), 94. Hereinafter cited as Hillman (ed.), Mr. President.

No attempt at supervision of service conduct or military policy determination was allowed. The committee concerned itself with fact-finding in respect to military procurement, construction, types and terms of gonverment contracts and the method of awarding such contracts. Through the committee, Truman also made certain that small manufacturers and suppliers got a fair percentage of the government's business, especially through sub-contracting with the principal contractual agents. The committee concerned itself with the practices of all manufacturing and labor units operating within the national defense program. "In other words," as Truman summed it up, "the committee was directed to examine every phase of the entire war program."[35]

In the four years it existed, the Truman Committee accomplished much with very little: Truman has estimated that his committee saved the nation $15 billion while spending about $400 thousand for expenses.[36] Through tireless investigations, endless hearings, annual reports and thirty-two special reports to the Senate, the Special

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[35]Truman, Memoirs, I, 167. See also, Buchanan, United States and World War II, II, 315; Brant, "Harry S. Truman-II," 635-36; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 35-37; Huston, New York Times, April 15, 1945; Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 184-85; Cecil V. Crabb, Jr., American Foreign Policy in the Nuclear Age: Principles, Problems, and Prospects (Evanston, Illinois: Row, Peterson and Company, 1960), 117-18. Hereinafter cited as Crabb, American Foreign Policy.

[36]Truman, Memoirs, I, 186; Hersey, "Profiles," Pt. 1, 45.

Committee generated a great deal of publicity that must have had a strong deterrent effect on those who might otherwise have been tempted to misuse government funds. As the committee grew in stature, the Administration and military services became more cooperative. Roosevelt, once he became convinced Truman was not out to smear him, gave "wholehearted cooperation."[37]

The Army and Navy were not always quick to cooperate with the Truman Committee. One example of this military opposition concerned industrial reconversion. As early as 1943, Donald M. Nelson, head of the War Production Board, urged that planning begin for reconversion of industry to peacetime production. In February 1944 Bernard Baruch made the same appeal. In March 1944 the Truman Committee reported that the "plans for reconversion should be started immediately."[38] The War Department, desirous of preserving full strength, responded to this appeal with a forceful progaganda campaign that garnered public and Administration support by ringing all of the changes on patriotism and predicting that troops would be without guns or ammunition because of production lags. The result of this campaign was a failure on the part of the government to adequately

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[37]Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 94.

[38]Richard N. Current, Secretary Stimson: A Study in Statecraft (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1954), 204. Hereinafter cited as Current, Secretary Stimson.

prepare or initiate any substantive reconversion steps prior to Harry Truman's taking office.[39]

In 1946, in the midst of runaway inflation brought on--at least in part--by War Department hostility, Donald Nelson reflected on the role of the military. Nelson concluded that the economic and social systems of the nation were endangered when military men could exercise power over civilian affairs.[40] Truman, who through his struggles with the services in his Special Committee investigations had lost some of his overly-romantic views of the military, had expressed similar concern in an interview:

> The function of generals and admirals is to fight battles. . . . They have no experience in business or industry, and the job of producing what they ask for should be left to businessmen under the direction of experienced civilians. I am firmly convinced that any attempt on the part of these ambitious generals and admirals to take complete control over the nation's economy would not only place vital functions in inexperienced hands, but would present a definite threat to our post war political and economic structure.[41]

Truman steadfastly maintained that his committee functioned only as an investigative body ". . . trying to remove obstructions to the success of the production program

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[39] Ibid., 204-205.

[40] Ibid., 205.

[41] Transcription of interview with Truman, "March of Time" radio broadcast, November 26, 1942, Truman Papers, RG-1, Senatorial Files, "National Defense Committee-General," Truman Library.

and to prevent the repetition of costly errors."[42] In fact, because of its prestige, it began to influence the way the services, defense agencies and the Roosevelt Administration conducted the military efforts of the nation. The "Doghouse," Truman's name for a small meeting room within his senatorial offices, was visited by a steady stream of military personnel, defense agency heads, private contractors and legislative liaison personnel from the White House. To these men Truman often pointed out irregularities in their conduct that caused them to change their method of operation.[43]

Roosevelt found himself confronted by a determined Senator Truman on several occasions. In January 1942, for example, Truman told FDR that his committee was going to recommend that wartime production be concentrated under a single person for greater efficiency. The following day, the White House announced that Donald Nelson was to coordinate all defense production as director of the Office of Production Management. A short time later, when

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[42]Truman to Joseph P. Smithers, April 4, 1942, "Special Senate Committee to Investigate the National Defense Program-General," Senatorial Files, Truman Papers, (Truman Library).

[43]Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 188; Buchanan, United States and World War II, 316; Brant, "Harry S. Truman--II," 635-36. For Truman's own explanation of the unique methods he employed in operating his committee, see his Memoirs, I, 187-90.

the Truman Committee became critical of the OPM and called for a drastic reorganization, Roosevelt responded by establishing the War Production Board.[44] While Truman greatly admired FDR, he was not intimidated by him. "Mr. President," Truman told him during one exchange, "the White House and Capitol are not connected by a one-way street."[45]

With sincere humility but little accuracy, Truman characteristically understated the role he and his committee played in the war effort. Typical is this reply to a correspondent in 1943: "The Congress is only a legislative body. . . . There is not very much a Senator or Congressman can do but publicly discuss the shortcomings

[44]Wilfred

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[44]Wilfred E. Binkley, President and Congress. (3rd rev. ed., New York: Random House, 1962), 328. Hereinafter cited as Binkley, President and Congress. See also, Daniels, Man of Independence, 221; Time, (March 8, 1943), 13; Crabb, American Foreign Policy, 118.

[45]Brant, "Harry S. Truman-II," 638. President Roosevelt was able to use the Truman Committee to help keep his administrators in line. As Truman recalled in April 1959, FDR called him down to the White House frequently to make the same request: "I'd go down and talk to him (Roosevelt), and he'd say, 'So-and-so over here, I can't do anything with him, and he's causing me trouble. I wish you'd give him a poke or two.' I'd do it and the thing would straighten out. That got me into a lot of trouble. He finally decided that maybe I'd make a good Vice-President." Truman Speaks, 38.

of those who are supposed to administer the law."[46] Irving Brant, in a profile he wrote on Truman in 1945, may have come closer to the truth, if overstating his case somewhat, when he wrote, "I believe, that aside from President Roosevelt, Senator Truman has contributed more than any other civilian to the winning of the war."[47]

The Truman Committee made mistakes, usually minor, often involving faulty data or the misuse of sweeping critical generalities, but it is very difficult to find criticism of their total effort during World War II. On the contrary, the reverse is true. It is easy to find praise of Truman and the committee from all quarters. For example, James Forrestal, then Under Secretary of the Navy, wrote to Truman, " The Truman Committee has served a useful purpose in providing a medium for the exploration of criticisms of the war effort. . . . The Navy . . . welcomes the kind of additional outside scrutiny

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[46]Truman to Marion J. Bowles, March 13, 1943, "Special Senate Committee to Investigate the National Defense Program-General," Senatorial Files, Truman Papers.

[47]Brant, "Harry S. Truman-I," 577. Brant's sentiments were akin to those of most Washing correspondents. They found Truman to be, "The one civilian member of the Government, who, next to the President himself, knew most about the war." See New York Times, April 14, 15, 1945. See also Binkley, President and Congress, 328.

which your Committee provides."[48] "I would like to express the appreciation of the War Department," Under Secretary of War Robert Patterson testified in 1942, "for the very constructive assistance that this Committee has rendered. . . . Some of the very best features of our war program have their origins from the investigations made by this Committee."[49] In a similar vein, Donald Nelson, Chairman of the War Production Board, wrote: "I wish to express the hope that your Special Committee. . . may continue to serve the same high purpose that it has comprehended so well since its creation. That purpose . . . has been to obtain the best possible results in our march toward total economic mobilization for war."[50]

Most of the news media were equally impressed with the work of the Truman Committee. Luther Huston, in a profile of Truman for the New York Times, wrote that the Special Committee had probably averted numerous national scandals and saved the country billions of dollars.[51] An editorial in the same newspaper, following Truman's

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[48]Forrestal to Truman, January 6, 1943, "Special Senate Committee to Investigate the National Defense Program-General," Senatorial Files, Truman Papers.

[49]Transcript, Patterson testimony before Truman Committee, (undated), ibid.

[50]Nelson to Truman, January 9, 1943, ibid.

[51]Huston, New York Times, April 15, 1945.

swearing-in at the death of FDR, found reassurance in ". . . the ability which Mr. Truman has shown, and of which the work of the Truman Committee is sufficient proof, to grow in stature with the assumption of increased responsibility."[52] The New Republic editorialized about the "voluminous and excellent series of reports about the conduct of the defense effort and the war economy . . ." that were a product of the Truman Committee.[53] In a cover story on Truman in 1943, Time Magazine called the Special Committee the most useful agency of the Government in World War II. The article described the Committee as "the closest thing yet to a domestic high command" and went on to say:

> Its members had no power to act or order. But, using Congress's old prerogative to look, criticize and recommend, they had focused the strength of public opinion on the men who had the power. . . . With battle-royal impartiality, they had given thick ears and red faces to Cabinet members, war agency heads, generals, admirals, big businessmen, little businessmen, labor leaders. . . . For a Congressional committee to be considered the first line of defense . . . is encouraging to believers in democracy. So is the sudden emergence of Harry Truman, whose presence in the Senate is a queer accident of democracy. . . .[54]

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[52] New York Times, April 15, 1945.

[53] New Republic (April 23, 1945), 540. For a detailed listing of the major accomplishments of the Truman Committee, see Brant, "Harry S. Truman-II," 636.

[54] Time, XLI (March 8, 1943), 13.

There is little reason to doubt that the Truman Committee had served the nation well. It also served its chairman well. Harry Truman would most surely have remained an obscure Senator, a footnote in the political history of the nation, had he not chaired the Special Committee. His chairmanship brought him a large, deserved degree of favorable national recognition. It earned for Truman a reputation for dedication and incorruptibility which dispelled the shade of Tom Pendergast and the attendant fumes of rotten politics from automatic association with his name. And while there is no office that can fully prepare a man for the singular office of the presidency, Truman's committee work had given him invaluable experience in leadership and administrative organization and a unique insight into the myriad complexities of commanding a nation involved in total war.[55]

On August 3, 1944, Truman submitted a letter to the President of the Senate, resigning as chairman and member of the Special Committee. He was now the vice-presidential nominee of the Democratic Party. He feared that continued association with the Committee would lead to attacks on the

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[55]Phillips, Truman Presidency, 37; Binkley, President and Congress, 327-28; Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 194. For a view somewhat contrary to that expressed here, see Wilber W. Hoare, Jr., "Truman," in May (ed.), Ultimate Decision, 181-82. Hereinafter cited as Hoare, "Truman."

bipartisan nature of its work.[56] Members of the Special Committee urged him to stay but respected the reasons for his resignation. The members adopted the following resolution on the occasion of his departure, which, of all the encomiums he received for his efforts on the Committee, must have pleased Truman most, for it represented the judgment of his peers:

> WHEREAS Hon. Harry S. Truman, U.S.S., has submitted his resignation as Chairman of this Committee, and the members of this Committee with the greatest of reluctance have accepted his resignation,
>
> THEREFORE IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Committee insert into its permanent records this unanimous expression of its sentiment.
>
> Under the leadership of Hon. Harry S. Truman, the United States Senate, Special Committee Investigating the National Defense Program, which appropriately became known as the Truman Committee, has established a record which speaks for itself.
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> The Senator from Missouri conceived this Committee. . . . His work has been characterized by modesty, tact and diplomacy, and by his infinite capacity for preserving harmony within the Committee. . . . His devotion to duty. . . , his good judgment, his patriotic love of his country, all are reflected in the Nation's confidence in this Committee. . . .
>
> The accomplishments of the Committee reflect these characteristics of its great Chairman, and its members say to their colleague from Missouri, Colonel Harry S. Truman, Field Artillery, Officers Reserve Corps, "Well done, soldier!"[57]

Guessing about Roosevelt's possible running mates began in early 1944. Henry Wallace, the incumbent

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[56] Truman to Henry Wallace, August 3, 1944, reprinted in Truman, Memoirs, I, 185-86.

[57] Resolution, (undated), "Special Senate Committee to Investigate the National Defense Program-1944," Senatorial Files, Truman Papers.

Vice-President, had acquired numerous enemies because of his strident liberalism, out-spoken belief in the occult and undiplomatic candor. Late in the spring of 1944, Edward Flynn, boss of the Democratic machine in New York City, made an informal survey of key areas of the country at FDR's request. Flynn reported back to Roosevelt that Wallace would hurt the ticket more than any other nominee he could propose.[58] The President gave no visible sign of diminished confidence in Wallace as his running mate. However, the rumors that Wallace was going to be dumped persisted, and the conjecture in the press continued up until the convention in July. The most prominent names being touted in the Vice-presidential betting were those of James Byrnes, Director of War Mobilization, Justice William O. Douglas, and two members of the Senate, Alben Barkley and Harry Truman.

For reasons known only to him, Roosevelt refused to end the guessing game by positively endorsing one man. Throughout the year, he had allowed others to conclude that he was endorsing one or the other among the aspirants, or that he was sticking with Wallace. Even as the convention opened in July, FDR remained uncommitted.[59]

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[58]Phillips, Truman Presidency, 38-39; Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 202.

[59]Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 203-208, passim.

Truman can probably be believed in his contention that he did not want to leave the Senate for the Vice-Presidency. The best evidence for that is the commitment he made to nominate Jimmy Byrnes for the office just prior to leaving for the convention.[60]

At the Democratic convention in Chicago, Robert Hannegan, Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, tried in vain for several days to convince Truman that he was the President's choice. Truman refused to accept this and continued to promote Byrnes' candidacy. The intrigues, deals and maneuvers by the various factions ended after five days in a telephone conversation between Hannegan and FDR on July 24. Truman was in Hannegan's suite at the time, along with most of the major big city bosses of the party who were trying to convince him to allow his name to be placed in nomination. Truman heard both ends of the conversation, because of Roosevelt's habit of talking very loudly on the telephone. FDR asked Hannegan if Truman had accepted. When told he had not, Roosevelt said, "Well you tell him if he wants to break up the Democratic party in

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[60]Truman has since decided that Byrnes knew FDR had indicated he wanted him (Truman) on the ticket when Byrnes asked him to make the nominating speech. Truman, Memoirs, I, 190, 192. See also, Phillips, Truman Presidency, 46.

the middle of a war, that's his responsibility."[61] Truman has recorded his reactions in his Memoirs:

> I was completely stunned. I sat for a minute or two and then got up and began walking around the room. All the others were watching me and not saying a word.
> "Well," I said finally, "if that is the situation, I'll have to say yes, but why the hell didn't he tell me in the first place?" . . . The following day I was chosen by the convention as its nominee for the vice-presidency of the United States.[62]

The Democratic ticket won easily, carrying thirty-six states, over the Republican slate of Thomas Dewey and John Bricker. Harry Truman's apprenticeship lasted only eighty-two days. He saw the President on very few occasions, much less had he had as a Senator.[63] The Vice-President found himself at loose ends with little to do

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[61]Truman, Memoirs, I, 192. See also Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 215; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 47; Buchanan, United States and World War II, II, 332-33; Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1969), 137. Hereinafter cited as Acheson, Present at the Creation. The party leaders present at this meeting, in addition to Truman and Hannegan, were Edward Flynn, Frank Hague, Edward Kelly, Edwin Pauley, and Frank Walker.

[62]Truman, Memoirs, I, 192-93. The selection of Truman was described by at least one newspaper as the "Second Missouri Compromise". New York Times, April 14, 1945.

[63]In his capacity as Chairman of the Special Committee, Truman used to meet with the President, ". . . at least once a week, and more often if he (FDR) thought it necessary." During Truman's Vice-Presidency, Roosevelt was in Washington a total of about thirty days. See Truman, Memoirs, I, 56, 195. See also, Steinberg Man From Missouri, 230.

aside from presiding over the Senate, a task more ceremonial than exacting. Truman anticipated this: "I had spent a great deal of time reading the history of past administration. . . , when I became Vice-President, I was familiar with the incongruities and inadequacies of that office."[64] It is an irony of history that Truman is related in his ancestral lines with John Tyler, the first Vice-President to succeed to the Presidency.[65]

Late in the afternoon of April 12, 1945, Truman received a message at the Capitol asking that he come to the White House immediately. Upon his arrival he was taken to Eleanor Roosevelt's study where she met him with the words, "Harry, the President is dead." After a pause, he asked her if there was anything he could do. Truman recalls being quite moved by the grace and understanding of her reply: "Is there anything we can do for you?" Mrs. Roosevelt asked. "For you are the one in trouble now."[66]

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[64]Truman, Memoirs, I, 53.

[65]"Tyler's brother was the father of my great-grandmother, and the whole Tyler family is mixed up with both sides." Truman, Memoirs, I, 53.

[66]Ibid., 5.

## CHAPTER III

## WORLD WAR II STEWARDSHIP

> I had hurried to the White House to see the President, and when I arrive, I found I was the President.[1]

Some two hours after being called to the White House, Harry Truman was sworn in as the thirty-second President by Chief Justice Harlan Stone. In the brisk but polite manner that became commonplace, Truman completed the oath-taking ceremony in little over a minute, made a few announcements and told reporters he was "going home, to bed."[2]

Before leaving the White House, Truman asked all of FDR's cabinet[3] to remain in their positions, at least temporarily. He tried to allay fears of any great changes

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[1]Harry S. Truman to Martha Truman, April 16, 1945, reprinted in Truman, Memoirs, I, 43-44.

[2]New York Times, April 13, 1945.

[3]The Cabinet, as Truman took office, consisted of Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., Secretary of State; Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Secretary of the Treasury; Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War; Francis Biddle, Attorney-General; James Forrestal, Secretary of the Navy; Frank C. Walker, Postmaster General; Claude R. Wickard, Secretary of Agriculture; Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior; Henry L. Wallace, Secretary of Commerce; and Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor. Truman, Memoirs, I, 324.

by stating that he intended to carry on as Roosevelt would have. He underscored this with an announcement that the organizational meeting of the United Nations, due to open in San Francisco on April 25, would convene as scheduled by FDR. Truman's final announcement on this fateful evening also struck a note of assurance, although it hardly seemed necessary under the circumstances: "The world," he said, "may be sure that we will prosecute the war on both fronts, east and west, with all the vigor we possess to a successful conclusion."[4]

Reflecting back on these crowded days of April some four years later, Truman said: "No one, I think, in the history of the country ever assumed a greater responsibility than I did."[5] In the sense that Truman awoke on April 12, 1945, comfortable in the impotent obscurity of the Vice-Presidency and went to bed that night commander in chief of the greatest military force ever assembled on earth, he is correct. He had no more knowledge of current military policy and strategy than any other citizen could obtain from the censored accounts appearing in the

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[4]Statement by the President, April 12, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 1; New York Times, April 13, 1945.

[5]Louis W. Koenig (ed.), The Truman Administration: Its Principles and Practices (New York: New York University Press, 1956), 30. Hereinafter cited as Koenig (ed.), Truman Administration.

newspapers. Roosevelt had not confided in his immediate successor. It was as if the understudy to the lead character in a drama had not been allowed to see the script. Truman later acknowledged that he was not "adequately informed" on matters of foreign policy.[6] He had not been told of the atomic bomb, for example; nor had he ever been invited inside the "Super Secret Map Room" of the White House, which contained detailed maps of current troop dispositions and battle situations throughout the world.[7] Given the condition of Roosevelt's health and the complexities of the massive war effort, FDR must be faulted for not keeping Truman apprised of major military developments. While such a procedure seems dictated by common sense, it was not required by law and would have been precedential.[8] The British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, was amazed to discover that Truman had not been kept abreast of events. Truman had requested that Churchill meet with him for two or three days talk following Roosevelt's funeral. Because of the press of affairs in England, Churchill decided not to attend the funeral and

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[6] *Truman Speaks*, 66.

[7] Truman, *Memoirs*, I, 50-51.

[8] Buchanan, *United States and World War II*, II, 499-500; Hoare, "Truman," 181-82.

sent Truman his regrets.[9] Reflecting on his decision later, the Prime Minister felt he had made a mistake:

> In the after-light I regret that I did not adopt the new President's suggestion. I had never met him, and I feel that there were many points on which personal talks would have been of the greatest value, especially if they had been spread over several days and not hurried or formalised. It seemed to me extraordinary, especially during the last few months, that Roosevelt had not made his deputy and potential successor thoroughly acquainted with the whole story and brought him into the decisions which were being taken. This proved of grave disadvantage to our affairs. . . . In these early months his position was one of extreme difficulty.[10]

While it is certain that Truman could be benefited from being taken into Roosevelt's confidence, it appears equally certain that few men in the nation were better prepared to assume civilian direction of the military. It was a fortunate accident of fate that his work on the Truman Committee had provided the new President with an unparalleled knowledge of military affairs. This did not go unnoticed. An editorial in the New York Times on April 14, 1945, noted: "No member of the Senate, no elected official of the Government of the United States, has had a better and more intimate view of the whole war machine than the man who directed the activities of the

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[9]Winston S. Churchill to Truman, April 13, 1945, reprinted in Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, Vol. VI, The Second World War (6 vols., Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1953), 479. Hereinafter cited as Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy.

[10]Ibid., 479-80.

Truman Committee. . . ."[11] To inform himself of current military and foreign policies, Truman summoned his military leaders and Secretary of State to meet with him on April 13, 1945, his first full day in the Presidency.

Truman's first official caller as President was Secretary of State Stettinius, who briefed him on all current diplomatic matters. Truman asked the Secretary to continue the practice begun under Roosevelt, whereby the State Department prepared a two-page summary of diplomatic developments for daily presentation to the President. Truman found these summaries, along with the daily reports from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "immensely helpful in filling gaps in my information" and "indispensable as aids in dealing with many issues. . . ."[12] Truman asked Stettinius to have a report for him before the day was out on the background and status of all international problems confronting the Administration. That part of the report analyzing relations with the Soviet Union contained a prophetic line: "Since the Yalta Conference the Soviet Government has taken a firm and uncompromising position on

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[11] New York Times, April 14, 1945.

[12] Truman, Memoirs, I, 14. The military intelligence reports were compiled by a central intelligence staff headed by Major General Hoyt S. Vandenberg. See Arthur Krock, New York Times, July 16, 1946.

nearly every major question that has arisen in our relations."[13]

The military leadership[14] met with Truman at 11:00 A.M. April 13, to acquaint the new Commander in Chief with the existing military situation and strategic planning. At the time of their meeting, some units of the Ninth Army had crossed the Elbe River and were moving eastward. The "Ruhr Pocket"--last major German resistance west of the Elbe--was crumbling rapidly. In the East, the Soviet forces had crossed the Oder and were moving against Berlin. It was obvious that Germany was beaten, that the tide was irreversible. The military chiefs told Truman that it would take at least more months to completely defeat Germany.[15] This very pessimistic estimate (Germany capitulated in less than a month) was based in part on Allied intelligence reports of a heavily-fortified "National Redoubt" in which the Germans planned to resist

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[13]State Department, Memorandum to the President, April 13, 1945, reprinted in Truman, Memoirs, I, 14-17.

[14]General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff, Army; Admiral Ernest J. King, Chief of Naval Operations; Secretary of War Stimson; Secretary of the Navy Forrestal; Lt. General Barney M. Giles, Army Air Force; General A.A. Vandergrift, Marine Corps Commandant; Admiral William D. Leahy, Chief of Staff to the Commander in Chief. Truman, Memoirs, I, 17. See also, New York Times, April 14, 1945.

[15]New York Times, April 13, 1945; Truman, Memoirs, I, 17. See also, Vincent J. Esposito (ed.), West Point Atlas of American Wars (2 vols., New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1959), II, Sect. 2, Map Plate No. 70. Hereinafter cited as Esposito (ed.), West Point Atlas.

to the last man. This redoubt did not exist.[16]

As to the Pacific, the Chiefs were able to report to the President that Japan had now been driven out of most of the islands it had conquered, with the major fighting at the time being concentrated on Okinawa. The bitter fighting for Iwo Jima in March had provided the Army Air Force with airfields within fighter escort range from which to strike at mainland Japan using the B-29 "Superfortresses" based in the Marianas Islands. These massive bomber strikes at heavy industries, particularly aircraft plants, failed to substantially lower production. General Curtis LeMay, in charge of the XXth Bomber Command, received approval for a change in tactics to the use of incendiaries (fire-bombs) on urban population centers. The new bombing targets, according to A. Russell Buchanan in his history of World War II, were "the congested inflammable cities and the people in them."[17] Buchanan has described the first massive demonstration of the "fire-bombing" technique:

> On March 8, counting on the surprise of low-altitude night attack, General LeMay ordered a mass fire bomb

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[16]Stephen E. Ambrose, Eisenhower and Berlin, 1945: The Decision to Halt at the Elbe (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Incorporated, 1967), 73-79, passim. Hereinafter cited as Ambrose, Eisenhower and Berlin. See also, Cornelius Ryan, The Last Battle (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1966), 209-13. Hereinafter cited as Ryan, The Last Battle.

[17]Buchanan, United States and World War II, II, 575-76.

> raid on Tokyo. On the following day 334 bombers, carrying about two thousand tons of bombs, left bases in the Marianas. . . . The result was one of the worst holocausts of all time. The target was a part of Tokyo into which people were crammed on an average of 103,000 to the square mile. The conflagration gutted about a fourth of the city's buildings and rendered homeless more than a million persons. Casualty lists were terrific; 83,793 persons died and 40,918 were injured. People caught in the bombed area were helpless for there was no place to go, and the fire-fighting equipment was utterly inadequate. Water boiled in some of the smaller canals running through the flaming city. Not excepting later raids, the Tokyo fire raid on March 9-10, 1945, was the most destructive air raid in history.[18]

Truman accepted these new air tactics against the Japanese mainland, and on his authority the Joint Chiefs of Staff approved a list of thirty-three Japanese cities that the Army Air Force could attack with incendiary devices.[19] Although LeMay and the Air Force hoped that their air attacks would be a substitute for invasion, most of the military were convinced that only by invasion would the Japanese be conquered. Their estimated time for the final conquest of Japan was as conservative as it was for Germany: They told Truman it would take about a year and a half.[20]

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[18] Ibid., 576-78. For detailed maps and a textual explanation of these bombings, see Esposito (ed.), West Point Atlas, II, Sect. 2, Map Plate No. 166.

[19] Buchanan, United States and World War II, II, 578.

[20] Truman, Memoirs, I, 17.

As the military chiefs were leaving his office, Truman asked Admiral Leahy to remain. He asked Leahy to continue in his unique post as chief of staff to the Commander in Chief. FDR had created the post; it consisted simply of meeting with the President each morning and briefing him on all military events of the past twenty-four hours, along with any other factors--political events, economic or production problems, etc.--which might have a bearing on the conduct of the war. Truman noted in his Memoirs that he asked Leahy to stay on in the post because he found in the Admiral a blunt and direct man who would not equivocate in his presentations.[21]

Truman apparently decided on his first day in office

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[21] Ibid., 18. One scholar of the Cold War period, D(enna) F(rank) Fleming, sees the retention of Leahy as military adviser to Truman as a factor in the coming of the Cold War. Fleming says that Leahy, because of these daily briefings, was in a unique position to influence the President and that the Admiral had "a long time aversion to the Russians." Fleming perceives a Leahy-influenced anti-Soviet bias emerging in Truman some ten days after taking office. See, The Cold War and Its Origins, 1917-1960 (2 vols., Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Incorporated, 1961), I, 266. Hereinafter cited as Fleming, The Cold War. Cabell Phillips, in his study of Truman, disagrees with Fleming. He claims that Leahy, along with Stimson and Marshall, advocated "getting along with the Russians at all costs." Truman Presidency, 71. There can be little doubt of Leahy's bluntness, however. When informed by FDR that he wanted Truman as his Vice-President, Leahy asked, "Who the hell is Truman"? Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 13. Later, at a meeting where scientists explained the atomic bomb project to the new President, Leahy observed: "That is the biggest fool thing we have ever done. The bomb will never go off, and I speak as an expert in explosives." Truman, Memoirs, I, 11.

that the nation and the allies needed pointed reassurance that the change of Executives did not mean a change in American policy. Accordingly, he asked the leaders in the House and Senate to convoke a joint session of Congress on Monday, April 16, 1945, that he might address them.[22] Underlining the concern of the allies toward changes in U.S. policy was a meeting between Truman and Anthony Eden, the British Foreign Secretary, the morning of the President's address to the Congress. During the course of their discussion Truman assured Eden that it was his intention ". . . to continue on exactly the same lines of foreign policy as the late President had followed."[23]

In his address to Congress, which was broadcast live by the major radio networks, Truman began by eulogizing Roosevelt as ". . . a great man who loved, and was beloved by, all humanity." He pledged himself to carry out the military plans and peace proposals of FDR. The President warmly endorsed the existing military leadership and promised they would remain "unchanged and unhampered." In a warning to Germany and Japan, he said that they should not misunderstand, "that America will

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[22]Truman, Memoirs, I, 19. See also, New York Times, April 14, 1945.

[23]Anthony Eden to Churchill (cable), April 16, 1945, reprinted in Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 474-85.

continue the fight for freedom until no vestige of resistance remains!" Truman said that anything short of total victory would endanger a future peace. Thus, "Our demand has been, and it remains--Unconditional Surrender!" The remainder of the speech (about half) was devoted to an earnest plea for all Americans to support the efforts about to begin at San Francisco to form the United Nations organization as the one great hope for enduring peace.[24]

It was quite clear after a few days in office that Truman's concept of his role as Chief Executive and his relationship with his war cabinet and the military chiefs was quite dissimilar to FDR's. For example, Roosevelt usually met with individual cabinet officers before cabinet meetings to discuss the problems of their departments. Seldom was there any contention or open discussion in FDR's cabinet meetings, which were largely cut-and-dried affairs. Truman felt that Roosevelt expended much time and energy going those things that should have been the delegated responsibility of cabinet members. Truman faulted Roosevelt for acting as his own Secretary of State, Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of the Navy and

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[24]Address Before a Joint Session of Congress, April 16, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 1-6, passim. Text is printed in New York Times, April 17, 1945. See also, Truman, Memoirs, I, 42.

Secretary of War.[25] The Truman style was quite different and more direct: All matters were normally discussed in open cabinet meetings. Personal leadership now gave way to an institutional approach to administrative matters that was more efficient and less colorful than the flamboyant style of the Roosevelt era.[26]

The Joint Chiefs and the Service Secretaries found that they were dealing with a very different commander in chief. While Truman did have to be brought up to date on present operations, he was in no sense dependent upon the military for command decisions. The new Commander in Chief ". . . acted as a full-fledged master of the guild from the day he took office."[27] It was Truman's conviction that the President must be the "absolute commander" of the country's armed forces. He believed the President had to set policy guidelines for the military, approve their strategic and major tactical recommendations when

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[25]Truman, Memoirs, I, 328-29. Senator Vandenberg agreed with Truman, at least as far as the post of Secretary of State was concerned. On the day Truman took office he confided to his diary: "Stettinius is now Secretary of State in fact. Up to now he has been only the presidential messenger. He does not have the background and experience for such a job at such a critical time. . . . Now we have both an inexperienced President and an inexperienced Secretary. . . ." Vandenberg, Private Papers, 167-68.

[26]Roy Roberts, New York Times, April 15, 1945. See also, Truman, Memoirs, I, 329.

[27]Hoare, "Truman," 182.

proper and see to it that they implemented the policies of the Administration.[28] The most obvious immediate change that Truman made with respect to the command function was that, unlike Roosevelt, he insisted that all military decisions above the very routine receive his approval prior to their implementation. He makes this clear in his Memoirs:

> From the time I became President I made it plain, in my relations with the military, that I was interested in the details of actual administration as much as the larger objectives. . . . I took the position that the President, as the Commander in Chief, had to know everything that was going on. I had had just enough experience to know that if you are not careful the military will hedge you in.[29]

Truman's relationship with his military chieftains began well and, with few exceptions, continued harmoniously throughout the five months remaining in World War II. Stimson noted early that he was encouraged ". . . by the calm, decisive demeanor of Harry S. Truman, the new Commander in Chief."[30] All of them were impressed with his energy and ability to absorb and retain lengthy technical reports. The relationship was made easier by

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[28] Truman Speaks, 6.

[29] Truman, Memoirs, I, 88.

[30] Richard G. Hewlett and Oscar E. Anderson, Jr., The New World, 1939-1946 (Vol. I of A History of the United States Atomic Energy Commission. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1962), 347. Hereinafter cited as Hewlett and Anderson, The New World.

Truman's great admiration for men like General Marshall and Admiral Leahy. On their part, the military leadership were grateful for Truman's frankness and acceptance of command responsibility. When things went wrong, he sought solutions, not scapegoats.[31] Because of these factors, Truman was able to write: "My meetings with the Chiefs of Staff were always highly informative and productive." But he hastened to add the qualification that, ". . . the policy of the government determines the policy of the military. The military is always subordinate to the government."[32] At a later date, in another war, this same Commander in Chief was compelled to make a very unpupular decision in defense of this principle.

In Europe, as April drew to an end, the German forces that remained found themselves pressed into an increasingly narrow and deadly corridor between the Russians advancing from the East and the Allied troops driving forward from the West. The latter halted their advance generally along the Elbe River line, where, in the first days of May, they were joined by advance units of the Soviet Army. As the jaws of this martial vise were drawing together, and European victory became a certainty,

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[31]Hoare, "Truman," 182-83.

[32]Truman, Memoirs, I, 210.

a struggle went on within the Allied camp over military objectives.[33]

The original plans for the conquest of Germany had called for the major push of the Allies to be directed against Berlin. But the unanticipated speed with which the advance proceeded on both fronts in March changed the strategic situation. Toward the end of March, the Allied Supreme Commander, General Dwight Eisenhower, determined that a concentration of these forces in movement against Berlin was no longer militarily worthwhile. The bulk of major German strength was south of Berlin. Eisenhower ordered a movement of his major forces southward, deciding that his proper objective was the destruction of enemy forces, not the capture of a geographic area of limited military significance.[34] Eisenhower's decision is clearly consonant with one of the basic principles of warfare: The object of military activity should be the destruction of enemy forces in the field, not the capture of places. Therefore, Eisenhower's decision to abandon a futile race with the Soviet armies for the capture of a place--Berlin--

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[33]Buchanan, United States in World War II, II, 456-58; Esposito (ed.), West Point Atlas, II, Sect. 2, Map Plate No. 71.

[34]Ambrose, Eisenhower and Berlin, 60-62; Truman, Memoirs, I, 211-12; Buchanan, United States and World War II, II, 453-54.

was based primarily on military, not political considerations.[35]

The American Joint Chiefs of Staff, President Roosevelt, just prior to his death, and President Truman, had all approved of Eisenhower's decision. However, the British Chiefs of Staff and Prime Minister Churchill took strong exception to this decision to leave the capture of Berlin to the Russians. On April 18, 1945, Churchill sent a message to Truman asking that Eisenhower extend his advance as far eastward as possible and hold these "tactical zones" pending final settlement of the permanent zones of occupation with the Russians.[36] Churchill's arguments for the extension of the Allied advance, which he hoped would include Berlin, were based on political considerations. Truman indicated later that he recognized the request as such: "Churchill was worried over Russian intentions and wanted all the territory we could get for bargaining purposes after the war. . . . For him, Berlin was not just a military matter but a matter of state. . . ."[37]

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[35]In Eisenhower and Berlin, Ambrose disagrees, holding that Eisenhower's decision was "rooted in political considerations." (See pp. 28-29.)

[36]Churchill to Truman, April 18, 1945, printed in Truman, Memoirs, I, 61-2, 211, 213.

[37]Ibid., 213.

By the end of April the success of Eisenhower's troops in southern Germany added a new dimension to the controversy over military and political objectives. The British were urging Eisenhower to advance into Czechoslovakia at least as far as Prague, the capital. On April 28 Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall communicated the British suggestion to Eisenhower, indicating that if military considerations were not involved he would be against the loss of lives to obtain political advantage.[38] Eisenhower replied that he agreed with Marshall and that he considered his primary mission to be the capture of Linz (Austria) and the "National Redoubt."[39] Churchill appealed this decision of the generals to their Commander in Chief on April 30. The Prime Minister told Truman that Allied liberation of Prague and western Czechoslovakia could well determine the postwar political environment of that country as well as many neighboring nations. Although this movement toward Prague must be secondary to Eisenhower's movement against remaining organized resistance in Germany, Churchill concluded, ". . . the highly important political consideration mentioned above

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[38]Ambrose, Eisenhower and Berlin, 83-84.

[39]Ibid., 84.

should be brought to his attention."[40]

While Truman worried over what response to make to the British, he received a memorandum from the Acting Secretary of State,[41] indicating that the State Department felt the proposal had merit. The note argued that an American occupation to the Moldau River line (Prague) would significantly enhance the bargaining relationship vis á vis the Russians. Truman was urged to ask the Joint Chiefs of Staff to give the proposal serious consideration.[42]

Truman did submit the proposal to the JCS, and he also cabled Eisenhower asking for his views. The President's military advisers were agreed. On May 1, 1945, Truman, after noting that the proposal would necessitate high casualties for questionable gains, sent the following unusually curt reply to Churchill:

> General Eisenhower's present attitude, in regard to operations in Czechoslovakia, which meets with my approval, is as follows:
> QUOTE. The Soviet General Staff now contemplates operations into tho Vltava Valley. My intention, as soon as current operations permit, is to proceed and destroy any remaining organized German forces.
> If a move into Czechoslovakia is then desirable, and if conditions here permit, our logical initial move

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[40]Churchill to Truman, April 30, 1945, printed in Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 506. See also, Truman, Memoirs, I, 216.

[41]Joseph C. Grew.

[42]Truman, Memoirs, I, 216.

would be on Pilsen and Karlsbad. I shall not attempt any move which I deem militarily unwise. UNQUOTE. 43

The controversy between Truman and Churchill hinged upon a prior agreement between the Allied Powers respecting eventual zones of occupation to be established following the defeat of Germany. The operational lines of the Western Allies had already passed these boundaries by late April, and they were fighting for land they would eventually have to surrender to the U.S.S.R. The American Army had continued on into these areas for military reasons; they were pursuing a force in retreat in hopes of eliminating all armed resistance. Churchill encouraged still deeper penetrations (toward Berlin and Prague) to capture geographic trophies of psychological and political importance in postwar negotiations. Truman and his military leadership demurred because the price in casualties would be too high. Truman further disagreed because he felt committed to the zonal agreements Roosevelt had made. Also, he was not inclined to dictate a change in strategy to a general who was carrying out an eminently successful military operation. "The only

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43Truman to Churchill, May 1, 1945, printed in Truman, Memoirs, I, 216-17. See also, Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 506-507; Ambrose, Eisenhower and Berlin, 85. The Pilsen-Karlsbad line noted by Eisenhower would have been some forty to fifty miles short of Prague. The war ended before Eisenhower's forces attained that line.

practical thing to do," Truman recalled in his Memoirs, "was to stick carefully to our agreement and to try our best to make the Russians carry out their agreements."[44]

The zonal agreements on Germany to which Truman felt committed, were drafted by FDR and Churchill at the Quebec Conference in September of 1944.[45] In the Crimean (Yalta) Conference of February, 1945, the Quebec Plan was accepted by Stalin.[46] In a message to Truman on April 18, Churchill admitted, with obvious regret, that these zones were decided upon ". . . rather hastily at Quebec . . . when it was not foreseen that General Eisenhower's armies would make such a mighty inroad into Germany."[47]

The "mighty inroad" made by Eisenhower's forces had a telling effect by the last week in April. On the twenty-fifth Truman received a "scrambler" telephone call

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[44]Truman, Memoirs, I, 214. See also, Phillips, Truman Presidency, 72-73.

[45]Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 508-510; Truman, Memoirs, I, 213.

[46]A map describing the original agreement at Quebec appears in Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 509.

[47]Churchill to Truman, April 18, 1945, printed in Truman, Memoirs, I, 62. From the security of his noninvolvement, Truman has written with respect to the military boundaries: "This shows conclusively that heads of state should be very careful about horseback agreements, because there is no way of foretelling the final result." See ibid., 213.

from Churchill.[48] The Swedish government had informed Churchill that they had been contacted by Heinrich Himmler, head of the Gestapo, proposing to surrender all German troops on the Western Front. The Germans would continue to fight the Russian advance on the Eastern Front. Truman agreed with Churchill that the offer, even if valid, was unacceptable. The Allies had previously agreed to an unconditional surrender on all fronts, simultaneously.[49] Truman immediately informed Premier Stalin of the offer and his response.[50] Apparently the President clung to insistence on unconditional surrender because of the Yalta Pact. In defense of the doctrine he acknowledged it had no moral or educational value, but it was of value in facilitating the take-over and control of a defeated nation.[51]

On April 27 Eisenhower's headquarters informed Truman that American and British forces had met a Russian force advancing from the east at Torgau, south of Berlin.

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[48]The "scrambler" telephone is a security device that garbles the voice into unintelligible patterns until the signal is rearranged by a properly-encoded receiving device.

[49]Himmler falsely claimed that Hitler had suffered serious brain damage and that he was in effective command and able to make a legitimate surrender offer. Truman, Memoirs, I, 88-91.

[50]Truman to Stalin (Cable), April 25, 1945, printed in Truman, Memoirs, I, 94.

[51]Ibid., 208-209.

The remaining German forces were bisected and crumbling. Truman issued a statement praising the cooperative spirit of the Allies, the troops and the courageous leadership of Roosevelt. He also used the occasion to endorse the efforts to create the United Nations, a theme that recurred often in his messages during this period: "Nations which can plan and fight together shoulder to shoulder in the face of such obstacles . . . can live together and can work together in the common labor of the organization of the world for peace."[52]

Events in Europe were moving swiftly. The German forces in Italy, along with their Fascist divisions, ended their resistance on May 2. Truman sent a message of congratulations to General Mark Clark, the American commander in Italy and issued a statement on the surrender heavy with the leaden phrases he resorted to at such moments:

> The Allied Armies in Italy have won the unconditional surrender of German forces on the first European soil to which, from the West, we carried our arms and our determination. Let Japan as well as Germany understand the meaning of these events. Unless they are lost in fanaticism or determined upon suicide, they must recognize the meaning of the increasing,

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[52]Press Release, April 27, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 25-26. See also, Truman, Memoirs, I, 106.

> swifter-moving power now ready for the capitulation or the destruction of the so-recently arrogant enemies of mankind.[53]

The last few days of the fighting in Europe were characterized by desperate movements of German troops away from the Russian front toward the American and British lines, where they hoped to surrender to more forgiving enemies. Accepting the inevitable, on May 5, Admiral Karl Doenitz[54] ordered Admiral Hans von Friedeburg to go to Eisenhower's headquarters (SHAEF), then located at Rheims, to attempt to surrender on just the Western Front. Backed by Truman's express position that only a total capitulation on both fronts was acceptable, Eisenhower rejected the offer. The following day, Friedeburg was joined by General Alfred Jodl, apparently with orders from Doenitz to stall the negotiations as long as possible, thus permitting more troops to move

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[53]Truman to Clark, May 2, 1945 (Cable), Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 32; Statement by the President on the Surrender of German Forces in Italy, May 2, 1945, ibid., 31; Truman, Memoirs, I, 201.

[54]Hitler apparently took his own life on April 30. Prior to this, on April 28, he had denied any authority to Himmler or Hermann Goering, his Luftwaffe chief. Both had attempted to take command in the last weeks of the fighting. As head of the government and the military, Hitler named Admiral Doenitz, who assumed command on May 1, 1945. Forrest C. Pogue, The Supreme Command in Kent Roberts Greenfield (ed.), The United States Army in World War II (Washington: USGPO, 1954), 474. Hereinafter cited as Pogue, Supreme Command. See also, Buchanan, United States in World War II, II, 461.

westward and surrender to some force other than the Russians. Eisenhower ordered the negotiations ended unless the Germans ended their delaying tactics. Informed of this, Doenitz allowed Jodl to sign a temporary surrender document, subject to formal ratification in forty-eight hours. The lethal machines fell silent in Europe with the formal acceptance of surrender at 11:45 P.M., May 8, 1945.[55]

"In recognition of the unconditional and abject surrender of the Nazi barbarians," the President cabled Eisenhower, "please accept the fervent congratulations and appreciation of myself and of the American people. . . ."[56] Responding in kind, the General said, "Permit me to assure you of my personal gratification that my Commander-in-Chief has found my efforts worthy of special commendation."[57] A friendship was developing between the General and the President that would endure until the campaign of 1952. Truman did, in fact, greatly

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[55]Pogue, Supreme Command, 486; Buchanan, United States in World War II, II, 462-63.

[56]Truman to Eisenhower, May 8, 1945 (Cable), Eisenhower Papers, Personal Files 108, "Truman, Harry S. (1)," Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, Abilene, Kansas. Hereinafter cited as Eisenhower Library. Text of message to Eisenhower also appears in Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 51-52.

[57]Eisenhower to Truman, May 10, 1945 (Cable), Eisenhower Papers, Personal Files 108, "Truman, Harry S. (1)," Eisenhower Library.

admire many of the military men that commanded in World War II. On various occasions, in addition to Eisenhower, he noted his admiration for General Omar Bradley and Admirals Chester Nimitz and Ernest King. He always reserved his most lavish praise for General Marshall. He has said that Marshall was the "brains" that made the military organization function properly: "General Marshall . . . was in every sense the chief architect of the grand strategy of the war for the Allies. . . ."[58]

When the fighting ceased, Western armies occupied Germany to the Elbe River line, a small portion of western Czechoslovakia and most of Austria. Churchill, whose distrust of the Soviet Union seemed to him vindicated by Russian activities in the liberated eastern European nations, attempted once again on May 6 to get Truman to hold the furthest line of advance rather than retiring some one hundred miles westward to the prearranged zones. Churchill's desire to use the occupied territory to force Russian concessions met with Truman's intransigence. As for immediate withdrawal, the President was willing to allow the field commanders to decide whether or not they

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[58]Truman, Mr. Citizen, 181, 185-86. "I have said it many a time . . . I think General Marshall is the outstanding man of that war period." Truman, Press Conference, January 7, 1949, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1949, 9. For a similar tribute, see Truman, Memoirs, I, 235.

could vacate a zone safely. As for eventual retirement to the Quebec Plan zones, he intended to keep Roosevelt's promises, as he understood them. Churchill, probably anticipating Truman's attitude, called for a meeting of the Big Three to settle the postwar status of Europe and the final plans for the defeat of Japan. Truman accepted this call, for what became the Potsdam Conference, but in his reply to Churchill he emphasized that "in the meantime it is my present intention to adhere to our interpretation of the Yalta agreements, and to stand firmly on our present announced attitude. . . ."[59]

On May 11 Churchill repeated his request of the sixth, asking Truman not to order his troops out of the Russian zones. In fact, Churchill asked Truman to issue a freeze order on all troops in the European theater of operations. Truman rejected Churchill's requests after consultation with his own military leadership, while acknowledging that he, too, was concerned about Russian intentions in Europe.[60] This seems a fairly clear instance of Truman's being inclined to allow military factors to dominate his thinking. He had sound reasons for pulling

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[59]Churchill to Truman, May 6, 1945, quoted in Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 501; Truman to Churchill, May 9, 1945, reprinted in Truman, Memoirs, I, 218-19.

[60]Truman, Memoirs, I, 298.

troops back: His interpretation of the Quebec and Yalta agreements; a desirous redeployment of forces into the war in the Pacific; an unwillingness to antagonize the Soviet Union, whose promised aid against Japan appeared necessary at the time.[61] In retrospect, it seems that Churchill's urgent pleadings--although on purely political grounds--deserved a more through hearing than the record would indicate they received. Truman's chief advisers, General Marshall and Secretary Stimson, while not unaware of the English objections to withdrawal, had their minds fixed on concentrating maximum force against the Japanese.[62] Their advice quite naturally reflected their orientation and their primary objective, victory in the Pacific. Given these factors, it is reasonable to conclude--with Churchill--that, "Mr. Truman was of course only newly aware at second hand of all the complications that faced us, and had to lean heavily on his advisers. The purely

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[61] Ibid., 298-99. In commenting on Churchill's fear that redeployment meant leaving Europe "prostrate and at the mercy of the Red Army," Truman said that he would pull out of Europe only those troops that could be spared: "We were committed to the rehabilitation of Europe, and there was to be no abandonment this time." Ibid., 262.

[62] Walt W. Rostow, The United States in the World Arena: An Essay in Recent History (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1960), 116. Hereinafter cited as Rostow, United States in the World Arena. See also, Truman, Memoirs, I, 79.

military view therefore received an emphasis beyond its proper proportion."[63]

Despite Churchill's numerous pleas,[64] Truman remained adamant. On June 3 he had the Joint Chiefs of Staff inform Eisenhower that the removal of his forces from the Russian zones was essentially a military matter.[65] Five days later Truman met with Harry Hopkins, a presidential adviser, who had just returned from separate talks with Premier Stalin and General Eisenhower. Hopkins advised Truman to set a positive date for withdrawal from the Russian zones. The President set the date for June 21, advising Churchill, "In consideration of the tripartite agreement . . . approved by President Roosevelt after long consideration and detailed discussion with you, I am unable to delay the withdrawal . . . in order to use pressure in the settlement of other problems."[66]

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[63]Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 513-14.

[64]Churchill repeated his request that Truman not withdraw troops from Europe on several occasions. See, for example, Churchill to Truman, May 12, June 4, 9, 1945, in Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 572-74, 603-604; Truman, Memoirs, I, 301-302.

[65]Truman, Memoirs, I, 301.

[66]Truman to Churchill, June 12, 1945, quoted in Truman, Memoirs, I, 303; Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 604-605. John Lukacs, among other scholars of the period, believes that Truman, in accepting the Yalta zonal boundaries against Churchill's pleas, set ". . . the geographical conditions of the Cold War." A History of the Cold War (rev. ed., Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Incorporated, 1962), 53.

Because of a Soviet-requested delay, the actual removals did not begin until July 1, 1945.[67]

At a Columbia University symposium in 1959 a student asked Truman what his role as Commander in Chief had been with respect to the diversion from Berlin and subsequent events. Truman's reply was that an agreement had been reached at Yalta ". . . that certain lines would be drawn in Germany. . . . I simply carried out the agreement, by ordering the troops to the lines which had been agreed upon. That's all there was to it."[68]

The agreement to which Truman alone seemed totally committed had been worked out at a conference at Yalta, in the Crimea, between Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin in February, 1945. The Big Three agreed to convoke a conference at San Francisco on April 25 to establish the United Nations. The Yalta Protocol also prescribed the voting formula for the Security Council of the U.N. The signatories reaffirmed the principles of the Atlantic Charter: "the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live--the restoration of sovereign rights and self-government to those peoples who

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[67]Truman, Memoirs, I, 304-305.

[68]Truman Speaks, 22-23. Truman had earlier noted the same conviction in his memoirs when he wrote: "My intention was always to carry out to the letter all agreements entered into by Roosevelt with our allies." Memoirs, I, 305-306.

have been forcibly deprived of them by the aggressor nations."[69] At Yalta the U.S.S.R. also agreed to enter the war against Japan within two or three months following the surrender of Germany. The tripartite administrative division of Germany was accepted, with the details to be decided upon by the Allied Control Council for Germany. Several territorial concessions were made to the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe and the Far East. These latter were in return for Stalin's agreement to bring his nation into the war with Japan.[70]

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[69]Document 10, Agreements of the Yalta Conference, February, 1945, in William Appleman Williams, The Shaping of American Diplomacy: Readings and Documents in American Foreign Relations, 1750-1955 (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1956), 930-31. Hereinafter cited as Williams (ed.), Shaping of American Diplomacy.

[70]Ibid., 931-5, passim. See also, draft statement, W. Averell Harriman to Senate Armed Services and Foreign Relations Committees, August (?), 1951, Papers of Theodore Tannenwald, "MacArthur--Copies of Memorandums re Hearings," Truman Library. Hereinafter cited as Tannenwald Papers. Harriman's statement is reprinted in U.S., Congress, Senate, Committees on Armed Services and Foreign Relations, Military Situation in the Far East: Hearings . . . to Conduct an Inquiry Into the Military Situation in the Far East and the Facts Surrounding the Relief of General of the Army Douglas MacArthur From His Assignments In That Area, 5 Parts, 82nd Cong., 1st Sess., 1951, Pt. 5, Appendix NN, 3328-42. Hereinafter cited as Far East Hearings. For full description and text of the Yalta Agreements, see U.S., Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers: The Conferences at Malta and Yalta, 1945 (Washington: USGPO, 1955). See also, "The Crimean (Yalta) Conference, February 4-11, 1945," Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, Appendix I, 3607-612. As with other security matters, Truman did not learn of the secret portions of the Yalta Pact until he became

Truman has recorded that the most pressing reason for his meeting Stalin and Churchill at Potsdam was to secure the immediate involvement of the Soviet Union in the war with Japan. The service chiefs' plan for the defeat of Japan was based on the assumption that the Russians would enter the Far Eastern conflict as Stalin had promised. The planners in the Pentagon were urging the President to secure a specific date from the Russians.[71] The meaning of Russian entry had been

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President. See memorandum, (unsigned) to Theodore Tannenwald, June 12, 1951, Tannenwald Papers, "MacArthur--Copies of Memorandums re Hearings," Truman Library.

[71]Truman, Memoirs, I, 314-15, 322-23, 411; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 96-97; Walter Millis (ed.), The Forrestal Diaries (New York: Viking Press, 1951), 78-79. Hereinafter cited as Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries. Stalin had first agreed to declare war on Japan--following the defeat of Germany--in October, 1943, at the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers. At the Teheran Conference the following month, the Soviet Premier personally re-affirmed this commitment to Roosevelt and Churchill. At Yalta, in February, 1945, Stalin agreed to a general date of "two or three months" after Germany's surrender for Russian entry into the Pacific fighting. In May, in talks at Moscow with Harriman and Harry Hopkins, Stalin said he would be ready to strike by August 8, with the actual date of Russian entry dependent upon Chinese acceptance of the terms of the Yalta Agreement on the Far East. Cable, Hopkins to Truman, May 28, 1945, quoted in Truman, Memoirs, I, 264. See also, Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 351-52.

stressed by the Joint Chiefs in a memorandum to Roosevelt early in 1945:

> Russia's entry at as early a date as possible consistent with her ability to engage in offensive operations is necessary to provide maximum assistance to our Pacific operations. . . .
> The objective of Russian's military effort against Japan in the Far East should be the defeat of the Japanese forces in Manchuria, air operations against Japan proper in collaboration with United States air forces based in eastern Siberia, and maximum interference with Japanese sea traffic between Japan and the mainland of Asia.[72]

Like Roosevelt before him, Truman accepted the military arguments for the desirability of involving the Soviet Union in the war against Japan.[73] However, in

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[72]Memorandum, Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) to Franklin Roosevelt, January 23, 1945, quoted in Draft Statement, Harriman to Senate Armed Services and Foreign Relations Committees, August (?), 1951, Tannenwald Papers, "MacArthur--Copies of Memorandums re Hearings," Truman Library. This document is reprinted in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, Appendix NN, 3332. Some six years after the fact, during the hearings cited above, Republican Senator Styles Bridges (N.H.), introduced a document which he claimed was the recommendation of the senior officers of the War Department. Dated April 12, 1945, the report was very strongly opposed to Russian entry into the war with Japan. The twelve reasons given are much more political than military in nature. The Department of the Army was unable to locate the original, indicating that it may have been one of several staff studies on the subject which were later destroyed, since no action was taken on them. Far East Hearings, Pt. 4, 2915-17.

[73]William L. Neumann, After Victory: Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin and the Making of the Peace (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 165. Hereinafter cited as Neumann, After Victory. The chief military reason was, of course, that the Red Army could hold or destroy Japanese forces in Manchuria, thus facilitating the planned American invasion of the Japanese home islands. Truman, Memoirs, I, 265, 314-15. The Joint Chiefs of Staff were unanimous in

doing so, he again had to reject political objections to Russian involvement. Churchill saw no genuine need to involve the Russians. In fact, at some time prior to the Potsdam meeting, he had become convinced that the United States did not desire Soviet participation at all.[74] Averell Harriman, wartime ambassador to Russia, was generally distrustful of Soviet intentions in all their diplomatic dealings and felt that they had compelling reasons to enter the war without American encouragement. Harriman had acquainted the President with his doubts on numerous occasions.[75] George F. Kennan, then Minister-Counselor of the Moscow Embassy, cabled a message to Harriman (in April, 1945) that eventually reached Truman's desk. Kennan warned that the Soviet Union would undoubtedly use intervention to secure "maximum power with

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earnestly desiring Soviet entry, as General Marshall later testified in the Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 562-63. See also, Dean G. Acheson testimony, ibid., Pt. 3, 1989. General Douglas MacArthur, Commanding General, Pacific Theater, was in complete agreement. Memorandum, George A. Lincoln to Marshall, March 8, 1945, quoted in Barton J. Bernstein and Allen J. Matusow (eds.), The Truman Administration: A Documentary History (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), 316-17. Hereinafter cited as Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), Truman Administration.

[74]Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 639.

[75]Phillips, Truman Presidency, 97; Truman, Memoirs, I, 77-79; Draft Statement, Harriman to Senate Armed Services and Foreign Relations Committees, August (?), 1951, Tannenwald Papers, "MacArthur--Copies of Memorandums re Hearings," Truman Library.

minimum responsibility" in areas of Asia beyond their own borders. "It would be tragic, Kennan believed, "if our natural anxiety for the support of the Soviet Union at this juncture . . . were to lead us into an undue reliance on Soviet aid. . . ."[76] Truman concluded that military considerations outweighed the possible political disadvantages that might accrue with Russian entry. His decision was not altered when, just before the Potsdam Conference, code intercepts indicated that the Japanese were actively seeking to end the fighting, although somewhat short of total unconditional surrender.[77]

The Potsdam Conference opened on July 17 and lasted for two weeks. Stalin reaffirmed at the very outset his promise that the Soviet Union would declare war on Japan. In a meeting of the American, British and Russian Chiefs of Staff, the Russians indicated they were concentrating forces along the Manchurian border as rapidly as possible. They anticipated their initial attack would come in the latter part of August. The exact date of their entry would be dependent upon concurrence of the government of

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[76]Cable, George F. Kennan to Harriman, April 24, 1945, quoted in George F. Kennan, Memoirs, 1925-1950 (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1967), 238. Hereinafter cited as Kennan, Memoirs. See also, Truman, Memoirs, I, 84-85.

[77]Buchanan, United States and World War II, II, 589.

China with the Yalta concessions.[78]

In all of this concern over involving Russia against Japan nobody on the American side seemed to appreciate Harriman's belief that Stalin had to involve his nation in the war. The important concessions made at Yalta could only be had by the Russians fighting the Japanese. The military operations would not be costly, since Japan was already beaten to the point of making peaceful overtures.[79] The rewards in glory and opportunity for hegemony to the liberators of the Far East would have been inducement enough. Truman would have found it far more difficult to convince Stalin that he should remain neutral.

After agreeing at Potsdam to enter the war, the Russians then questioned the method of their entry. They felt it would be best for all of the Allies actively engaged in the Far East to make a formal public request of

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[78]Truman, Memoirs, I, 382. The Sino-Soviet Agreement was signed at Moscow on August 14. The Soviet Union had declared war on Japan and invaded Manchuria on August 8, six days earlier. The Soviet timetable may have been changed by the atomic destruction of Hiroshima on the 6th. For an excellent account of the Potsdam Conference see Herbert Feis, Between War and Peace: The Potsdam Conference (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1960). Hereinafter cited as Feis, Between War and Peace.

[79]Buchanan, United States and World War II, II, 589; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 97.

the Soviet Union.[80] At this, Truman drew the line. In explaining his refusal in his Memoirs, Truman effectively summarizes his own thinking on the entire question:

> I did not like this proposal for one important reason. I saw in it a cynical diplomatic move to make Russia's entry at this time appear to be the decisive factor to bring about victory. At Yalta, Russia had agreed, and here at Potsdam she reaffirmed her commitment, to enter the war against Japan three months after V-E Day, provided that Russia and China had previously concluded a treaty of mutual assistance. There were no other conditions. . . . Our military advisers had strongly urged that Russia should be brought into the war in order to neutralize the large Japanese forces on the China mainland and thus save thousands of American and Allied lives. But I was not willing to let Russia reap the fruits of a long and gallant effort in which she had no part.[81]

At the beginning of the Potsdam meetings, Stalin had confirmed what Truman already knew from American intelligence activities: The Japanese were seeking terms of peace through Moscow.[82] In discussing the matter privately with Churchill on July 18, Truman balked at the Prime Minister's suggestion that they might consider accepting a Japanese offer short of unconditional surrender. "I had in mind saving their military honour and giving them some assurance of their national existence. . . ," Churchill recalled telling Truman. Truman's response, as Churchill remembered it, was to the effect that "the

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[80] Truman, Memoirs, I, 401.

[81] Ibid., 402-403.

[82] Ibid., 396. See also, Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 387.

Japs had no longer any military honour after Pearl Harbour."[83] Truman had insisted upon it in the case of Germany and--when announcing the German surrender--he called for the Japanese to lay down their arms unconditionally, promising only that they would not be enslaved or exterminated.[84]

Just prior to the opening of the July 28 meeting at Potsdam, Stalin announced that his government had received another peace overture from Japan. The gist of the message was that the Emperor wished to send Prince Konoye to Moscow to present the Japanese position on ending the war

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[83]Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 641-42. See also, Lord Moran's diary entry for July 18, 1945, in which he quotes from Churchill's dictated notes on his meeting with Truman in Charles Wilson (Lord Moran), Churchill, Taken From the Diaries of Lord Moran: The Struggle for Survival (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1966), 293-94. Hereinafter cited as Wilson, Churchill. In their first personal contacts at Potsdam, Truman and Churchill formed very favorable impressions of one another. Truman recalls: "I had an instant liking for this man. . . . There was something very open and genuine about the way he greeted me. Churchill and I never had a serious disagreement about anything." Truman, Memoirs, I, 340. For his part, Churchill recalled being impressed with Truman's, ". . . gay, precise, sparkling manner and obvious power of decision." Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 630. He was delighted by Truman's bluntness and high resolve in his talks with Stalin: "Winston," Lord Moran wrote, "has fallen for the President." Wilson, Churchill, 293-94, 306.

[84]Item No. 28, Statement by the President Calling for the Unconditional Surrender of Japan, May 8, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 50. See also, Truman, Memoirs, I, 206-207; Buchanan, United States and World War II, II, 598.

and obtain the services of the Soviet Union as mediator. Stalin told Truman that he intended to send a negative reply to the message. Truman thanked him and the matter was dropped.[85] The Japanese efforts to obtain a negotiated settlement were futile for two reasons. First, their request to have the Soviet government act as mediator was in vain, for, as one student of the war has noted, ". . . the leaders in the Kremlin had secured advantages at Yalta which they could insure only by entering the war against Japan, not by interceding on the latter's behalf to terminate the war."[86] Second, two days prior to this last request the governments of Great Britain, the United States and China had jointly issued an ultimatum that precluded Japanese efforts to obtain an end to the hostilities short of an abject surrender.

The ultimatum to Japan (called the Potsdam Declaration) had its genesis in late May 1945. Acting Secretary of State Grew, a former Ambassador to Japan, suggested to Truman that he consider issuing a proclamation calling on the Japanese to surrender, with the express assurance that

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[85]Truman, Memoirs, I, 396-97; Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 397. See also, James F. Byrnes, Speaking Frankly (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947), 205. Hereinafter cited as Byrnes, Speaking Frankly.

[86]Buchanan, United States and World War II, II, 589.

the Emperor could be retained as head of state. Truman asked Grew to forward his proposal through the State-War-Navy Co-ordinating Committee (SWNCC) and the Joint Chiefs of Staff for their views. The President felt the idea had merit.[87] Grew reported back to Truman on June 18 that all involved were agreed that such a statement should be made, but while Grew favored immediate issuance, the majority favored delaying publication until a more appropriate time. The military chiefs wanted to wait until such time as they could answer a refusal of the surrender demand with invasion of Japan.[88]

The President accepted the idea of the proclamation but rejected the proposed timing of both Grew and the military. He decided to issue the surrender ultimatum during the Potsdam Conference, which was then a month away. Truman's reasoning was that such a statement, coming from

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[87]Truman, Memoirs, I, 416-17; Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 66; Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 352; Louis Morton, "The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," in Kent R. Greenfield (ed.), Command Decisions (Washington: OCMH, 1960), 507. Hereinafter cited as Morton, "Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb." The SWNCC was a group composed of the Assistant Secretaries of the State, War and Navy Departments. It was established in 1944 to assist these three agencies in integrating their policy recommendations to the Administration. It had separate subcommittees for Germany and Japan. Current, Secretary Stimson, 223-24.

[88]Truman, Memoirs, I, 417. See also, Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 352, 363; Feis, Between War and Peace, 115.

Potsdam, would demonstrate allied unity. He also would know by then the Soviet intentions on entering the war and whether the atomic bomb had been tested successfully; two factors that could change the military strategy and effect the terms of surrender.[89]

Secretary of War Stimson, who, at Truman's request, had been working on a memorandum concerning the ultimatum to Japan, submitted his efforts to the President on July 2, and discussed it with him at Potsdam on July 16. Truman and the new Secretary of State, James F. Byrnes, reviewed Stimson's memorandum. The Secretary of War advocated immediate notification to the Japanese of the unconditional surrender demand, guaranteeing their internal polity, not excluding "a constitutional monarchy under her present

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[89]Truman, Memoirs, I, 417. Frazier Hunt, an unscholarly biographer of MacArthur, claims that the delay in issuing the surrender demand was to allow the Soviet Union time to enter the war: ". . . with all the deadly consequences of that act." He indicts "a leftist crowd calling themselves liberals," claiming that Dean Acheson, George Marshall, Archibald MacLeish, Owen Lattimore, Elmer Davis, et. al., were deliberately causing the delay. See his, The Untold Story of Douglas MacArthur (New York: Devin-Adair Company, 1954), 392-94. Hereinafter cited as Hunt, Untold Story of MacArthur.

dynasty."[90] On July 17, the Joint Chiefs of Staff sent the President a memorandum giving their views on the draft warning. They indicated their objection to the lines which told the Japanese that following the restoration of peace a new government could be established that would ". . . include a constitutional monarchy under the present dynasty."[91] Truman's military advisers recommended that a more general statement on a postwar government, designed to appeal to all elements in Japan, would be more likely to achieve the desired result. Stimson told Truman that he accepted the reasoning of the Joint Chiefs,

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[90]Current, Secretary Stimson, 232; Byrnes, Speaking Frankly, 206; Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 371-72, 383. See also, Bernstein and Matusow, (eds.), The Truman Administration, 33-36; Lansing Lamont, Day of Trininty (New York: Atheneum, 1965), 145. Hereinafter cited as Lamont, Day of Trinity. Urs Schwarz, American Strategy: The Growth of Politico-Military Thinking in the United States (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Incorporated, 1967), 57. Hereinafter cited as Schwarz, American Strategy. Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, On Active Service in Peace and War (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947), 620-24. Hereinafter cited as Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service. President Truman gave his "general approval" to Stimson's memorandum. For text of the July 2 memorandum, see Stimson, "The Decision to Use the Atom Bomb," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, January 28, 1947.

[91]Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 384-85.

with which Byrnes also concurred.[92]

The Potsdam Declaration was drafted without any mention of the fate of Emperor Hirohito or the monarchical institution, the very factors that had impelled Grew to initiate the discussions that led to this document. Truman accepted a purposely-ambiguous statement that did not improve the possibilities for a prompt surrender, but he did so on the advice of his Secretaries of War and State, and his Chiefs of Staff.[93] In the light of subsequent events--preservation of the imperial order being the condition that the Japanese would make and that Truman would accept--the decision was unfortunate. However, to fault Truman is to accuse him of lack of prescience and to assume that the Japanese government would have surrendered prior to the atomic-bombings had they been reassured with

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[92] Ibid., 385, 389; Byrnes, Speaking Frankly, 206. The JCS position is in conflict with an Army G-2 (Intelligence Division) report dated June 30, which indicated Japan might accept a modified surrender demand that assured retention of the imperial system. Report is quoted in Morton, "Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," 504-505.

[93] Neumann, After Victory, 176; Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 385. All the text of the declaration eventually said was that the conquerors would restore the government to Japanese control as soon as, ". . . there has been established in accordance with the freely-expressed will of the Japanese people, a peacefully-inclined and responsible government." Truman, Memoirs, I, 391-92.

respect to the Emperor.[94]

Truman did not comment substantively in his Memoirs on the decision to exclude mention of the Emperor. However, in 1959, he was asked, "Would it have been better to have made it clear in the Potsdam Declaration that the Japanese would be permitted to retain the Emperor?" Truman's reply is couched in phrases typical of his response to controversial questions; earthy and direct:

> How could you do it? When we asked them to surrender at Potsdam, they gave us a very snotty answer. That is what I got. They didn't ask about the Emperor. I said, if they don't surrender, they would be completely, totally destroyed. They told me to go to hell, words to that effect.[95]

Churchill approved the draft of the declaration that Truman showed him at Potsdam. Both agreed that China should be invited to become a signatory to the ultimatum. The text was transmitted to Chiang Kai-shek by radio, and he sent Truman his approval. The U.S.S.R., still technically at peace with Japan, was not invited to sign.

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[94]The Secretary of War had, by the 24th, returned to his original position on including an assurance to the Japanese that the imperial dynasty would be preserved. He told Truman he hoped that he would at least keep his mind open on the subject and if the Japanese made this a condition of surrender he would grant it to them. Truman said he would if those circumstances arose. Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 392-93; Truman, Memoirs, I, 429; Herbert Feis, Japan Subdued: The Atomic Bomb and the End of the War in the Pacific (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1961), 78-79. Hereinafter cited as Feis, Japan Subdued.

[95]Truman Speaks, 74.

The President issued the Potsdam Declaration at Berlin on July 26.[95]

After issuing the proclamation Truman sent orders to the Office of War Information to inform the Japanese people as fully and rapidly as possible of its provisions.[97] Immediately, strong radio transmitters located on Saipan began beaming a continuous broadcast to the Japanese home islands. On July 28 American bombers dropped about twenty-seven million leaflets over Japan. The leaflets summarized the terms of the Potsdam ultimatum. They also contained a list of eleven cities, indicating that soon four of them would be totally destroyed from the air. What the leaflets did not mention and what the Potsdam Declaration did not note, was that plans called for these cities to be destroyed not by the massive fire bombings which were becoming commonplace, but by individual nuclear devices.[98]

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[96]Truman, Memoirs, I, 387, 390; Lamont, Day of Trinity, 263; Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 395. For a copy of the text of the Potsdam Declaration see Truman, Memoirs, I, 390-92. For a full account of the Potsdam Conference see U.S., Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers: The Conference of Berlin (Potsdam), 1945 (2 vols., Washington, 1960).

[97]Truman, Memoirs, I, 390.

[98]Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 259. See also, Phillips, Truman Presidency, 59; Fleming, The Cold War, I, 304.

The reaction within the Japanese government to the Potsdam ultimatum was divided; the pivotal issue in the Supreme War Direction Council concerned the fate of the imperial house. The military members offered a strong argument that the absence of any mention of the Emperor was proof that their enemies wanted to destroy the Japanese nation. They must fight on through an invasion if necessary and win concessions from the Allies that would assure national existence and the imperial order. The Prime Minister and Foreign Minister were able to moderate the views of the military chiefs only slightly. On the afternoon of July 28, Prime Minister Kantara Suzuki told a press conference that his government found little that was new or of any value in the Potsdam Declaration. He concluded with the fateful phrase ". . . there is no other recourse but to ignore it entirely and resolutely fight for the successful conclusion of this war."[99] This statement set in motion the events that would bring the war to a swift and dramatic end.

The Potsdam Conference ended officially on August 2, 1945. Most of the discussions and decisions were

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[99]Feis, Japan Subdued, 97. See also, Current, Secretary Stimson, 232-33; Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 395-96; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 59.

political and diplomatic in nature. The Big Three powers agreed, for example, on the establishment of a Council of Foreign Ministers, the divisions and government of Germany, reparations payments, the government of Poland, admission requirements to the United Nations, the trial of war criminals and similar matters.[100] The "Joint Report" of the decisions made at Potsdam is very loosely-worded in many instances, representing compromises that were quite transitory in nature. George F. Kennan, the distinguished authority on the U.S.S.R., has made it clear in his Memoirs that he felt Truman had shown a great deal of naivete in dealing with the Russians: "I cannot recall any political document . . . which filled me with a greater

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[100]Item No. 91, Joint Report with the Allied Leaders on the Potsdam Conference, August 2, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 179-95, passim. Winston Churchill was adamantly opposed to the trials of Germany's leaders as war criminals. He felt that this was a dangerous principle, since it would encourage leaders facing defeat to fight on after all hope was gone, needlessly sacrificing lives. But Churchill, having lost his parliamentary majority, was replaced in the midst of the conference by Clement Atlee. Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 631. The former Prime Minister offered the same views three years later in a conversation with then Secretary of Defense James Forrestal, concerning the Japanese "war crimes" trials then in session. Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 524. George F. Kennan opposed the Nazi trials as well, but for an entirely different reason: "These men had placed themselves in a position where a further personal existence on this earth could have no positive meaning for them or anyone else. I personally considered . . . that if any of these men fell into the hands of Allied forces they should . . . be executed forthwith." Kennan, Memoirs, 260.

sense of depression than the communiqué to which President Truman set his name at the conclusion of these confused and unreal discussions."[101]

By the time the Potsdam Conference ended, so had most of the ground fighting in the Pacific theater, except on the Asian mainland. The last major land battle of the war had been won in late June, with the capture of Okinawa, largest island of the Ryukyus group. Located only 350 miles from Kyushu, one of the four main islands of Japan, Okinawa was considered an essential target by American strategists. The island would provide air bases within medium bomber range of Japan and was to serve as a major staging area for the planned invasion of the Japanese home islands.[102]

The aerial bombardment of Japanese cities had been gradually intensified. By mid-June the destruction

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[101]The "communiqué" referred to is the Joint Report cited in the preceding footnote. Kennan, Memoirs, 258ff. See also, Neumann, After Victory, 173, 177-78; Buchanan, United States in World War II, II, 505, 507-508. Kennan's view of Truman's diplomacy is substantially that of D. F. Fleming, who wrote: "Truman's narrative (in his memoirs), makes it clear he was not a negotiator." The Cold War, I, 292. As for Truman's view of Potsdam, he said: "You never saw such pig-headed people as are the Russians. I hope I never have to hold another conference with them." Quoted in Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 259.

[102]Esposito (ed.), West Point Atlas, II, Sect. 2, Map Plates Nos. 161, 165.

planned for the five principal cities of Japan[103] had been achieved. In Tokyo an estimated 3,100,000 persons had lost their homes to the fires generated by the incendiary bombs. The bombers were ordered to attack other cities of Japan.[104] By late July-early August, the Strategic Air Force B-29's based in the Marianas were meeting only limited resistance from enemy fighter planes and were sending several hundred bombers to strike Japan nightly. For example, on the night prior to the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, six hundred B-29's attacked Japan with the pilots reporting results from "good to excellent."[105]

As the fighting in Europe had drawn to an end, Truman had consulted several times with his military chiefs and the cabinet as to the best method of concentrating military efforts against Japan. The President implemented their suggestion that there be a rapid

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[103]The cities were Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka, Kobe and Yokohama.

[104]In all, American aircraft will deliver incendiary attacks against sixty-six Japanese cities, destroying about 169 square miles of these urban areas,killing 260,000 and leaving 9,200,000 homeless. Esposito (ed.), West Point Atlas, II, Sect. 2, Map Plate No. 166. For other accounts of the effectiveness of these fire raids, see Buchanan, United States and World War II, II, 579-80; Fleming, The Cold War, I, 297-98.

[105]Carl Spaatz (Commanding General, Army Strategic Air Forces) to Henry H. Arnold (Commanding General, Army Air Forces), August 6, 1945, RG18, Army Air Force (AAF), 312.1-Operations Letters-1945, National Archives.

redeployment of troops to the Pacific, with those military units having seen the least combat being the first to go. American force levels in Europe were to be reduced to a number sufficient for occupational duty only.[106]

Most of the land, sea and air combat in the Pacific Theater had been undertaken by the United States, with some assistance from Britain and the Commonwealth Nations. Exclusive supreme command of these forces was exercised through the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, as opposed to Europe, where Eisenhower was under the authority of the Combined (British and American) Chiefs of Staff. Truman went along with his Joint Chiefs, in July of 1945, in rejecting a British suggestion that a Combined Chiefs arrangement be adopted in the Pacific. However, he overrode the Joint Chiefs' recommendation that all military Lend-Lease to Britain's occupation forces in Europe be terminated.[107] Truman's general policy toward further expenditure of Lend Lease military and naval equipment was that it be limited to that which would be

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[106] Truman, Memoirs, I, 222.

[107] Memorandum, Brehon Somervell to George C. Marshall, RG18, AAF, Judge Advocate General (JAG), 400.336-Lend Lease, National Archives; Telegram, Truman to Clement Atlee, August 15, 1945, ibid. See also, Buchanan, United States in World War II, II, 504-505; Truman, Memoirs, I, 232-33, 382.

used directly against Japan.[108]

Commenting on his struggles with Congress over Lend-Lease appropriations, Truman revealed that--like many another commander in chief before him--he believed the President's war powers should not be limited by the Congress:

> A great many of the war powers that are delegated to the President when a war is actually going on are made for the duration of the war. But Congress is very jealous of its authority to keep the purse strings tight, as in the case of appropriations for Lend-Lease. That is all right in a republic when the republic is not in danger, but it always seemed to me that matters such as Lend-Lease should have been authorized for the duration of hostilities. . . .
>
> I made a fundamental distinction between powers that I requested during wartime and those that I expected during peacetime. . . . in connection with Lend-Lease appropriations, I felt all along that Congress should have given the President authority there for the duration of hostilities instead of renewing the legislation periodically.
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> When a nation is at war, its leader, who has the responsibility of winning the war, ought to have all the tools available for that purpose.[109]

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[108]Presidential Directive, July 6, 1945, quoted in memorandum, Thomas Goodman (Acting Air Judge Advocate) to General Hood, August 29, 1945, RG18, AAF, JAG, 400.336-Lend Lease, National Archives. A change in lend-lease policy which he approved was recommended to Truman in August. See memorandum, (unsigned) Foreign Economic Administration to Truman, August 13, 1945, ibid. A full statement of Truman's interim policy respecting lend-lease can be found in a directive, Secretary of War, "Presidential Policy on Military Lend-Lease," August 15, 1945, ibid. See also, Truman, Memoirs, I, 227-28, 231. In a directive dated August 21, 1945, the President cancelled all lend-lease operations. For text of the directive, see Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 232.

[109]Truman, Memoirs, I, 232, 234. Emphasis supplied.

In their planning for the conquest of Japan, the President's military advisers were generally agreed that this could only be accomplished by a massive amphibious invasion of the Japanese home islands. The strategic use of atomic weaponry was never a major factor in their deliberations since less than a month elapsed between the successful testing of the nuclear bomb and its operational use.[110]

At the Quebec Conference in September 1944, FDR and Churchill, on the advice of their military staffs, agreed in principle that the unconditional surrender of Japan necessitated an invasion of the home islands. The first strategic proposal for this invasion was presented to Roosevelt by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in a memorandum dated January 22, 1945:

> 1. The agreed over-all objective in the war against Japan has been expressed as follows:
> To force the unconditional surrender of Japan by--
> (1) Lowering Japanese ability and will to resist by establishing sea and air blockades, conducting intensive air bombardment, and destroying Japanese air and naval strength.
> (2) Invading and seizing objectives in the industrial heart of Japan.
> 2. The United States Chiefs of Staff have adopted the following as a basis for planning the war against Japan:
> The concept of operations for the main effort in the Pacific--

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[110]The development of the atomic bomb, Truman's decision to employ it and the postwar policies he established for nuclear weaponry are the subjects of the following chapter.

(a) Following the Okinawa operation to seize additional positions to intensify the blockade and air bombardment of Japan in order to create a situation favorable to:
(b) An assault on Kyushu for the purpose of further reducing Japanese capabilities by containing and destroying major enemy forces and further intensifying the blockade and air bombardment in order to establish a tactical condition favorable to:
(c) The decisive invasion of the industrial heart of Japan through the Tokyo Plain. . . .[111]

With the success of operations by April of 1945, the Navy was arguing that the JCS plans should be amended. Admirals Leahy and King were now convinced that an expanded naval blockade and an intensified bombardment by air would force Japan to surrender. General Marshall took the lead in opposing this idea. The Army Chief of Staff argued that an invasion would be faster and less costly. He also noted that massive aerial bombardments had failed to bring about Germany's surrender. In his position, Marshall had the support of Admiral Chester Nimitz and--most importantly--of General MacArthur, the Far Eastern Commander.[112]

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[111]Quoted in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, Appendix NN, 3332. See also, draft statement, Harriman to Senate Armed Services and Foreign Relations Committees, August 1951, Tannenwald Papers, "MacArthur--Copies of Memorandums re Hearings," Truman Library.

[112]Schwarz, American Strategy, 56; Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 348-49. Reports from intelligence experts supported the Army's view that bombings and blockades would not likely force surrender prior to an invasion. Morton, "The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," 504.

MacArthur disagreed with the Joint Chiefs' plan in respect to the operation against Kyushu. He thought the major initial landing should be directed against the Tokyo Plain in concert with a Russian move against Manchuria. However, MacArthur felt there was little possibility of a blockade and bombardment strategy being effective in bringing about surrender.[113] Bolstered by such arguments, the plan to force unconditional surrender by invading Japan remained unchanged.

In May Truman was approached by T. V. Soong, China's Foreign Minister, who said that his government hoped that the showdown battle against Japan would be fought by the United States on the Asian mainland. Secretary of War Stimson was opposed to this strategy, believing--with Marshall--that a direct invasion of Japan would be the least costly plan in the long run. Meeting with the President on May 16, shortly after Soong's visit,

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[113]Paul Freeman, Jr. to George C. Marshall, February 13, 1945, quoted in Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), The Truman Administration, 315-16; Cable, MacArthur to Marshall, April 20, 1945, quoted in Morton, "The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," 501; Marshall testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 563-64. It is difficult to reconcile MacArthur's views at the time with his subsequent statements during the hearings on his dismissal six years later. He told the Senators that the American naval blockade established after the capture of the Philippines and Okinawa blocked supplies from the armed forces within Japan. "The minute we applied that blockade," MacArthur testified, "the defeat of Japan was a certainty." Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 57-58.

Stimson argued against the Chinese proposal and outlined the grand strategy advocated by the military planners.[114] Stimson told Truman that the War Department favored attacking Japan itself, and not involving American ground forces in China. While deferring an immediate decision, Truman noted that "the plans for the campaign being worked out by the Joint Chiefs would, in their opinion, be adequate for the defeat of Japan without such a sacrifice of American lives as would be involved in a major engagement in China."[115]

Truman postponed any decision on the invasion plan because there was no immediate need to decide. He was probably hoping that the two unknown factors at the time, Russian entry into the war in the Far East and a workable atomic bomb, would be settled before he had to decide. The Joint Chiefs continued to refine their plans and, increasingly, what they proposed was an exclusively American action. They did not want the proferred British assistance, and more and more they were coming to feel that the Russian invasion of Manchuria, while desirable, was probably not essential. In a meeting on May 25, the JCS issued a directive setting the date for the invasion by the Sixth Army of Kyushu (Operation Olympic) as

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[114]Hewlett and Anerson, The New World, 350-51.

[115]Truman, Memoirs, I, 236.

November 1, 1945.[116] The invasion plans for the attack on Honshu (Operation Coronet), the major island of the Japanese group, set the assault onto the Kanto (Tokyo) Plain for about March 1, 1946.[117]

These were the plans formally presented to Truman for his approval by the Joint Chiefs and the Service Secretaries on June 18, 1945. In defending the plan General Marshall told the President that he was certain that the Japanese would not surrender until they had actually been invaded. This, he said, combined with a Russian attack in Manchuria and the havoc being inflicted by aerial bombardment of the cities and naval blockade of its sea lanes, should bring about Japan's capitulation. The General estimated the first month of fighting on Kyushu would entail some thirty-one thousand casualties. Truman asked each of the others present for their views on the proposed invasion. No one disagreed.[118] When he had

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[116]Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 351; Hunt, Untold Story of MacArthur, 391.

[117]Marshall testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 563; Esposito (ed.), West Point Atlas, II, Sect. 2, Map Plate No. 167; Morton, "The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," 502.

[118]Truman, Memoirs, I, 416. While no one disagreed with the plans, several offered related views. For example, Stimson hoped to find some approach to the Japanese that would bring about their surrender short of actual invasion. He was doubtlessly thinking of the upcoming Potsdam Declaration and the availability of the atomic bomb. Admiral Leahy denounced the unconditional

heard everyone out, Truman ordered the War Council to proceed with preparations for the invasion of Kyushu. As for Coronet, the operation against the heavily-industrialized central plain of Honshu, Truman told the military to continue its preparations, but that he was withholding final approval until it was essential for him to decide.[119]

At Potsdam, on July 17, 1945, Truman called together his advisers to re-examine military planning in view of the successful testing of the atomic bomb the previous day.[120] The advice given the President was to continue with the invasion plans as drafted. Truman recalls in his Memoirs:

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surrender formula adopted at Casablanca as making the invasion necessary. Admiral King told Truman that entry of the Soviet Union was still desirable, but was no longer considered indispensable to victory. Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 363-64. For a detailed description of Marshall's presentation to Truman of the JCS strategy recommendations, see U.S., Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers: Conference of Berlin (Potsdam), 1945 (2 vols., Washington, 1960), I, 904-9. An abridged version of the same can be found in Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), The Truman Administration, 5-8.

[119]Morton, "The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," 501-502; Schwarz, American Strategy, 56-57.

[120]In addition to Truman, those present were Secretaries Byrnes and Stimson, Generals Marshall and Arnold, and Admirals Leahy and King.

> We reviewed our military strategy in the light of this revolutionary development. We were not (sic., "now") ready to make use of this weapon against the Japanese, although we did not know as yet what effect the weapon might have, physically or psychologically, when used against the enemy. For that reason the military advised that we go ahead with the existing military plans for the invasion of the Japanese home islands.[121]

A few days after this meeting with his War Council, the Commander in Chief decided to use the new weapon, and, suddenly, the invasion plans, along with most contemporary military strategy, became obsolete. Truman's decision inaugurated an entirely new age in the history of man.

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[121]Truman, Memoirs, I, 415. In a subsequent meeting on July 24, Churchill and Truman received the final report of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. They both approved of this document, whose recommendations showed little change from the original JCS memorandum to Roosevelt on January 22, 1945. For text of the latter, see ibid., 381-82. For text of the Combined Chiefs memorandum of July 24, see Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, Appendix NN, 3338-39. As Louis Morton commented: ". . . the question of the bomb was divorced entirely from military plans and the final report of the conference accepted as the main effort the invasion of the Japanese home islands. See, "The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," 512.

# CHAPTER IV

## TRUMAN AND THE ATOMIC BOMB

> "To me, it was a weapon of war, an artillery weapon. We faced half a million casualties trying to take Japan by land. It was either that or the atom bomb, and I didn't hesitate a minute, and I've never lost any sleep over it since."[1]

Secretary of War Stimson had his last meeting with Franklin Roosevelt on March 15, 1945. They discussed the Manhattan Project to develop an atomic weapon. Roosevelt was concerned about criticism he had received from a man Stimson identifies as "a distinguished public servant" who maintained that the project was a multi-billion dollar "lemon" that scientists had sold to FDR.[2] Stimson calmed Roosevelt's fears by pointing out that every physicist of note, including four Nobel Prize winners, was working on the bomb. The remainder of their conversation dealt with future control of atomic secrets, postwar policy and a

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[1]Quoted in Cabell Phillips, "Truman at 75," New York Times Magazine (May 3, 1959), 107. Hereinafter cited as Phillips, "Truman at 75."

[2]Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 615. The "distinguished public servant" alluded to was probably Admiral Leahy. He was one of the few people who knew of the project and was certain it would fail. See Chapter III, footnote no. 21, supra.

statement to be issued following the first use of the bomb. Implied throughout the conversation, but never explicitly stated, was that Roosevelt would use the bomb against Japan once it was ready.[3] His death left the decision to Harry Truman.

Following the swearing-in ceremony on April 12, 1945, Stimson told Truman only that an immense project was underway to perfect a new explosive "of almost unbelievable destructive power."[4] This was the second time that Stimson had discussed the subject with Truman. In June 1943 the Truman Committee had become curious about several secret military plants (notably one at Pasco, Washington) and the budgetary masking of vast expenditures for these installations. Stimson called Truman and explained to him that the project was of the utmost

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[3]Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 615-16; Stimson, "Decision to Use the Atom Bomb," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, January 28, 1947. See also, Morton, "The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," 496. Most writers on the subject seem agreed that the decision by Roosevelt to make the bomb was the decision to use it. See, for example, Buchanan, United States and World War II, II, 582; Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 613; Matloff, "Roosevelt as War Leader," 434.

[4]Truman, Memoirs, I, 10. Stimson, in whom Truman had total confidence, was a pivotal figure in the atom bomb decision. As Secretary of War, he was charged with overall supervision of the Manhattan Project, and he was senior adviser to the President on the military applications of atomic energy. Current, Secretary Stimson, 229. See also, Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 347.

secrecy and asked him to call off his investigation. Truman had complied immediately, without demanding further explanation.[5]

On April 24 Stimson wrote to the President requesting a meeting at the earliest possible time. The Secretary wanted to fully brief the President on atomic developments and determine what Truman's policy would be.[6] The meeting was scheduled for the next day, the 25th. As Stimson recalls it. . . .

> I went to explain the nature of the problem to a man whose only previous knowledge of our activities was that of a Senator who had loyally accepted our assurances that the matter must be kept a secret from him. Now he was President and Commander in Chief, and the final responsibility in this as in so many other matters must be his. . . .[7]

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[5]Elting E. Morison, Turmoil and Tradition: A Study of the Life and Times of Henry L. Stimson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960), 616. For Truman's account, which varies somewhat in details, see Memoirs, I, 10-11. See also, Buchanan, United States and World War II, II, 318-19; Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 247-48. This is not the only instance of Truman respecting military security. In May, 1942, Julius H. Amberg, Special Assistant to Stimson, asked the then Senator Truman to quash an investigation by his committee counsel, Hugh Fulton, into an experimental project on target-seeking bombs. Again, Truman agreed without complaint or question. See Amberg to Truman, May 7, 1942 and reply, May 16, 1942, Truman Papers, Senatorial Files, "National Defense Committee-General," Truman Library.

[6]Stimson to Truman, April 24, 1945, quoted in Truman, Memoirs, I, 85.

[7]Stimson, "Decision to Use the Atom Bomb," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, January 28, 1947.

Stimson began the briefing by telling the President he felt it imperative that Truman know that this new weapon--which he was certain would work--would not only affect our future foreign relations, but would also revolutionize military thinking. If used, the bomb would undoubtedly shorten the war; but the question of using such an awesome device remained for Truman to decide. Stimson also told Truman that he must consider the postwar implications of American possession of the secrets of atomic energy. Scientists involved in the project were convinced that the United States could not maintain exclusive knowledge of the atomic process indefinitely. Perhaps, Stimson suggested, international control through the then-forming United Nations might be the best course to follow.[8] The Secretary of War, in his presentation to Truman, was clearly looking beyond the immediate military applications of the new weapon. Truman later observed: "Stimson . . . seemed at least as much concerned with the

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[8]Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 634-36; Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 343. See also, Morton, "Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," 496; Truman, Memoirs, I, 87; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 53-54. Strangely enough, almost a month after this briefing Budget Director Harold Smith, in a conversation with Truman, mentioned the "Manhattan Project." Truman asked him what it was. Apparently no one had mentioned the project's overall code name to the President. Diary entry, May 21, 1945, Papers of Harold D. Smith, Diary (April 18, 1945 - June 19, 1946), Truman Library. Hereinafter cited as Smith Diary.

role of the atomic bomb in the shaping of history as in its capacity to shorten the war."[9]

General Leslie Groves, chief administrative officer of the Manhattan District, had accompanied Stimson to this meeting with the President. Groves brought Truman up to date on the entire project, indicated its current status and offered approximate completion dates on the bombs. The general anticipated a test of the bomb in mid-July at the proving grounds near Los Alamos, New Mexico. If the test proved successful, an operational bomb could be ready some time in August. A special air group was already in training to deliver the bomb.[10]

Before the meeting ended, Stimson suggested to Truman that a committee be created to advise the President on all of the ramifications of the new weapon, particularly, whether it should be used against Japan or not.

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[9]Truman, Memoirs, I, 87.

[10]Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 343; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 54. General Groves had made substantially the same report to Roosevelt just prior to the Yalta Conference. Bourke Hickenlooper to Groves and reply, June 25, 1951, printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 4, 3119-20, 3132.

Truman agreed and the Interim Committee was established.[11] Later various panels were created to advise the Interim Committee on particular aspects (scientific, military, political) of their problems.[12] The members of the Interim Committee met together for the first time in the Pentagon on May 9, 1945. The discussion dealt mainly with defining the major problem areas. The group dwelt at length on what the President should tell the nation about the bomb test, what other nations should be told about the process, and how long it would take the Soviet Union to develop their own bomb (estimates varying from three to twenty years). The other question explored by this meeting had been raised by several scientists working on the bomb's

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[11]Truman, Memoirs, I, 419. See also, Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 616-17. The membership of the committee was as follows: Stimson, Chairman; George L. Harrison, Adviser to Stimson and President, New York Life Insurance Co., Co-Chairman; James F. Byrnes, Personal Representative of the President; Ralph A. Bard, Under Secretary of the Navy; William L. Clayton, Assistant Secretary of State; Vannevar Bush, Director, Office of Scientific Research and Development and President, Carnegie Institute; Karl L. Compton, Chief, Office of Field Services in OSRD and President, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; James B. Conant, Chairman, National Defense Research Committee and President, Harvard University. List taken from Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, footnote, 616.

[12]Among those advising the Interim Committee were Generals Marshall and Groves and distinguished nuclear scientists, such as Enrico Fermi, Arthur Compton and J. Robert Oppenheimer. Truman, Memoirs, I, 419. See also, Morton, "Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," 497; Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 344-45.

development: Should the atomic bomb be used at all, especially considering that Japan's defeat was now certain? On that same day, in another room of the Pentagon, General Groves, who had already answered that question in his own mind, met with another committee to select the Japanese city that would be the target of the first bomb.[13]

The decisive meetings of the Interim Committee occurred on May 31 and June 1, 1945. Their recommendations to the President can be stated briefly: (1) The atomic bomb should be used directly against Japan as soon as it becomes operational. (2) The target should be a war plant or military installation surrounded by buildings of light construction. (3) No advance warning as to the nature of the weapon should be given to the Japanese.[14]

James Byrnes informed Truman of the report soon after the second meeting ended. It is his recollection that Truman said ". . . regrettable as it might be, so far as he could see, the only reasonable conclusion was to use

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[13]Lamont, Day of Trinity, 103-104; Morison, Turmoil and Tradition, 624-25.

[14]Truman, Memoirs, I, 419. See also, Morton, "Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," 497; Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 617; Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), The Truman Administration, 10.

the bomb."[15] The reasoning behind the Committee's recommendations to Truman are obscured by conflicting accounts of the participants and security restrictions on the records of the Interim Committee. However, it is possible to make some general observations: There was only limited discussion of whether or not the bomb should be used at all.[16] The question of a nonmilitary demonstration of the weapon--upon a deserted island, for example--was considered. Objections were made that such a test might not be a strong enough argument to convince the militarists in control of Japan. It was also proposed that an uninhabited area of Japan be destroyed. The consensus view seemed to be that, like the island test, such a demonstration might not be convincing, would be a waste of fissionable materials; American prisoners might be moved

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[15]Byrnes, Speaking Frankly, 261-62. See also, Feis, Japan Subdued, 39.

[16]Urs Schwarz believes that no serious consideration was given to not using the bomb. American Strategy, 65. Interim Committee member Ralph Bard does not recall discussion of the subject, nor does physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer. Arthur Compton, on the other hand, recalls that "fullest consideration" was given to using the bomb, but that it was his impression that the Committee viewed it as a "foregone conclusion that the bomb would be used." Morison, Turmoil and Tradition, 625-27.

to the site, and it could be costly, should the bomb fail to detonate.[17]

The Interim Committee did not absolutely reject the idea of a demonstration to the Japanese of the power of the atom. Instead, they asked the Scientific Advisory Panel to consider the subject and make recommendations. The scientists submitted their report on June 16. The key statement of their report read: "We can propose no technical demonstration likely to bring an end to the war; we see no acceptable alternative to direct military use."[18] It should be noted that the Interim Committee did not wait for this study, which confirmed their judgments. The Committee recommendation to the President that a Japanese city be bombed was submitted two weeks earlier.

"The committee's function was, of course, entirely advisory," Stimson wrote some years later. He continued,

> The ultimate responsibility for the recommendation to the President rested upon me, and I have no desire to veil it. The conclusions of the committee were similar to my own, although I reached mine independently. I felt that to extract a genuine surrender from the Emperor and his military advisers, there must be administered a tremendous shock which would

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[17]Byrnes, Speaking Frankly, 261-62; Schwarz, American Strategy, 66. See also, Morison, Turmoil and Tradition, 626; Lamont, Day of Trinity, 110.

[18]Truman, Memoirs, I, 419. For full text of the report, see Feis, Japan Subdued, 42-43.

> carry convincing proof of our power to destroy the Empire. Such an effective shock would save many times the number of lives, both American and Japanese, that it would cost.[19]

Truman called a meeting of the War Council to discuss strategy against Japan on June 18, 1945.[20] Present were the Joint Chiefs, Navy Secretary Forrestal, Stimson and John J. McCloy, Assistant Secretary of War. Most of the meeting was taken up with Marshall's presentation to Truman of the invasion plans, with which the Joint Chiefs, Forrestal and Stimson agreed, when queried by Truman. McCloy was the only person present not to offer an opinion, since Stimson, his superior, was present. Just as the meeting broke up, Truman turned to McCloy and said that no one was going to leave without expressing his views.[21]

McCloy had been surprised by the entire meeting. All present were familiar with the Interim Committee report and yet no one had proposed to the President the use of the atomic bomb. McCloy suggested to Truman that

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[19]Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 617. In a 1951 hearing, General Marshall testified to the same effect, the opinion of the Joint Chiefs being that, ". . . nothing less than a terrific shock would produce a surrender." Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 562. There is some sketchy evidence in Stimson's diaries that he had assumed for some time that the bomb would be used. Morison, Turmoil and Tradition, 628-29.

[20]This meeting was discussed at length in the preceding chapter.

[21]Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 117.

some consideration should be given to the bomb's ability to bring about unconditional surrender. He favored, as he told Truman in the discussion that followed, telling the Japanese that the United States had the bomb and would use it unless they surrendered.[22] Truman was interested in the idea of including this warning in the ultimatum to be issued at Potsdam. However, as McCloy later reported, "not one of the Chiefs nor the Secretary thought well of a bomb warning, an effective argument being that no one could be certain . . . that the thing would go off."[23] Because of this, McCloy's proposal was put aside, only to be reconsidered and rejected at Potsdam.[24]

It is worth recording here that in the weeks just prior to the testing and use of the bomb, many atomic scientists--the only group aside from Truman's military advisers who knew of the atomic project--tried to persuade the Administration not to use the bomb against Japan. Having heard and reacted against the recommendations of the Interim Committee, a seven-man group was formed at the Chicago Metallurgical Laboratory, calling itself the

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[22] Ibid., 364.

[23] Quoted in Morton, "Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," 502.

[24] Morison, Turmoil and Tradition, 630-31. See also, Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 364; Lamont, Day of Trinity, 132-33.

"Committee on Social and Political Implications."[25] Their report, drafted for submission to Secretary Stimson, argued against the use of the bomb without warning. Such use, the report contended, would shock allied and neutral nations, undermine confidence in subsequent American attempts at obtaining an international agreement to ban atomic warfare, and probably would not be supported by American public opinion which would be hostile to this nation ". . . being the first to introduce such an indiscriminate method of wholesale destruction of civilian life."[26]

The basic recommendation of the Committee was that a test demonstration of the bomb be performed before representatives of all the United Nations in some deserted area. If after such a demonstration the Japanese rejected an ultimatum specifically warning that the bomb would be used, then perhaps the bomb should be employed (after obtaining the sanction of the American public and

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[25]The committee was chaired by James O. Franck, a Nobel Laureate. Among the membership were famous atomic scientists such as Glen Seaborg and Leo Szilard. Feis, Japan Subdued, 40.

[26]Feis, Japan Subdued, 41. For text of this report, see ibid., 41-42; "Franck Committee Report," printed in Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), The Truman Administration, 12-13; Current, Secretary Stimson, 230-31.

the United Nations).[27] The report was brought to Washington by James Franck, the Committee Chairman. On June 12, unable to see Stimson, or George Harrison, alternate chairman of the Interim Committee, Franck left the report with an aide in Harrison's office.[28]

The report of the Scientific Advisory Panel to the Interim Committee on June 16 (discussed earlier) took note of the Franck Committee report: "The opinions of our scientific colleagues on the initial use of these weapons are not unanimous. . . ," the Panel reported. They described the alternatives suggested as ranging from a technical demonstration to direct military application. The Panel rejected a demonstration as unlikely to bring about surrender and offered no alternative to direct use of the bomb against Japan.[29]

In late June Ralph Bard, a member of the Interim Committee, reversed his opinion with respect to bombing Japan without warning. In a memorandum on June 27 Bard

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[27]Feis, Japan Subdued, 41-42. See also, Fleming, The Cold War, I, 299; "Franck Committee Report," printed in Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), The Truman Administration, 12-13; Current, Secretary Stimson, 230-31.

[28]Editor's Note, "Franck Committee Report," in Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), The Truman Administration, 10.

[29]"Scientific Advisory Committee Report," reprinted in ibid., 15.

said that Japan should be given a few days' notice, ascribing his new views to a consideration of America's spirit of fair play and humanitarianism. Bard also felt that Japan was seeking an opportunity to surrender that such a warning could provide, especially if accompanied by assurances from the President with respect to the treatment of the Emperor and the Japanese nation following surrender.[30]

These early dissenters from atomic policy recommendations were joined by a substantial number of atomic scientists in July. Leo Szilard, one of the members of the Franck Committee, drafted and circulated a petition addressed to Truman directly. On July 17 Szilard submitted the petition--bearing the signatures of sixty-nine of his colleagues at the University of Chicago's Metallurgical Laboratory--to Washington. The petition argued the moral and political implications of using the bomb; it began and ended with pleas to Truman to use his powers as Commander in Chief with prudence and in consideration of the future, as the following excerpts indicate:

> Discoveries of which the people of the United States are not aware may affect the welfare of this nation in the near future. The liberation of atomic power which has been achieved places atomic bombs in the hands of the Army. It places in your hands, as Commander-in-Chief, the fateful decision whether or not to sanction

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[30]Bard Memorandum, June 27, 1945, ibid., 15-16. See also, Fleming, The Cold War, I, 300.

> the use of such bombs in the present phase of the war against Japan. . . .
>
> In view of the foregoing, we, the undersigned, respectfully petition: first, that you exercise your power as Commander-in-Chief to rule that the United States shall not resort to the use of atomic bombs in this war unless the terms which will be imposed upon Japan have been made public in detail and Japan, knowing these terms, has refused to surrender; second, that in such an event, the question of whether or not to use atomic bombs be decided by you in the light of the considerations presented in this petition as well as the other moral responsibilities which are involved.[31]

Other atomic scientists were becoming aroused over the bomb question during July. For example, on July 12 a poll of one hundred and fifty scientists at the Metallurgical Laboratory revealed that forty percent favored options other than the bombing of Japan without warning.[32]

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[31]Petition, Leo Szilard, et. al. to the President of the United States, July 17, 1945, in Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), The Truman Administration, 16-17. See also, Fleming, The Cold War, I, 300-301. Szilard had perhaps a greater feeling of responsibility for the bomb than most other scientists. He had helped convince Albert Einstein to write the fateful letter to Roosevelt that brought about the creation of the Manhattan Project. Feis, Japan Subdued, footnote, 40.

[32]Poll of 150 Chicago Scientists, July 12, 1945, printed in Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), The Truman Administration, 19-20. See also, Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 399-400. The figures given are confusing, since numerically, only fifty-eight chose the poll options that called for some action short of bombing without warning. However, seventy names appear on the Szilard petition completed in the next few days, calling for just such action. Either the poll was in error, or many did not participate. Louis Morton claims that the poll results, along with the Szilard petition were given to the Scientific Advisory Panel for consideration prior to their June 16 report. See, "Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," 498-99. This could not have been possible since the poll was taken on July 12 and the petition completed on July 17.

In this period, a petition from Chicago bearing eighteen names, and another from the atomic plant at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, carrying sixty-eight names, were submitted through channels, indicating varied reservations about military use of the bomb.[33]

From all indications, few, if any, of these dissenting views ever reached Truman. At least one petition was held up on a decision apparently made by General Groves. A memorandum attached to the petition explained that since the scientists had an opportunity to express themselves through the Scientific Advisory Panel, "no useful purpose would be served by transmitting . . . (the petition) to the White House, particularly since the President was not in the country."[34] Truman was, in fact, at the Potsdam Conference, having left the United States on July 6. The momentous decision Truman made to use the bomb was based on military advisories and the Interim

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[33]Editor's Note, Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), The Truman Administration, 18.

[34]Ibid., 16-17. See also, Lamont, Day of Trinity, 146; Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 399-400. The Szilard petition could have been forwarded to the President, for he received White House mail pouches which were flown in daily to him at Potsdam. See Truman to Martha Truman, July 3, 1945, quoted in Truman, Memoirs, I, 330-31. Herbert Feis, Japan Subdued (p. 63), feels it was "improbable"that the Szilard petition was forwarded to Truman. Steinberg claims, without offering any documentation, that Truman was aware of the Chicago poll. Man From Missouri, 259.

Committee recommendations. Much of the information that there existed a substantial number of objections to this line of reasoning was not made known to the President.

At 7:30 P.M., July 16, the day following Truman's arrival at Potsdam, a cable was received with the information that an implosion-type atomic fission bomb had been successfully detonated at the Alamogordo test site in New Mexico. Subsequent messages indicated the force of the bomb exceeded expectations.[35] The blast yielded a force equivalent to 20,000 tons of TNT; its light could be seen for 250 miles and the shock wave broke a window 125 miles from the epicenter of the explosion.[36] This was the news Truman had been waiting for. The bomb strengthened his position, for it meant that the Soviet Union was no longer needed in the Far Eastern War.[37]

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[35]Harrison to Stimson, July 16, 17, 1945 (Cables), Foreign Relations of the United States: Potsdam Papers, II, 1360-61; Groves to Stimson, July 18, 1945, ibid., 1361-8. See also, Lamont, Day of Trinity, 255; David Rees, The Age of Containment: The Cold War, 1945-1965 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1967), 13. Hereinafter cited as Rees, Age of Containment.

[36]Groves to Stimson, July 18, 1945 (Cable), Foreign Relations of the United States: Potsdam Papers, II, 1361-68, passim.

[37]Truman probably pushed back the Potsdam date to await the test results. He did have the estimated test date (mid-July), when he asked for the postponement from July 1. Lamont, Day of Trinity, 108-109. The scientists at Alamogrodo were definitely pushed to test around July 16. Oppenheimer recalled (in 1954) that both Stimson and Vannevar Bush had told him it was very important that

At a Pentagon meeting on July 4, 1945, the British had agreed that the bomb should be used against Japan.[38] However, they noted that one problem existed in that Russia was officially ignorant of the bomb. If Truman said nothing about the weapon to Stalin at Potsdam, relations between the Big Three would be jeopardized when the bomb was used a short time later. The general feeling was that Truman should inform Stalin of the bomb sometime during the conference.[39] The recommendation of the Interim Committee, made to Truman a few days earlier, was in agreement with this position. The Committee had also

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he test before the Potsdam meeting. Oppenheimer testimony, quoted in Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), The Truman Administration, 20-21. See also, Lamont, Day of Trinity, 147. Truman had said that "preparations were being rushed for the test . . . at the time I had to leave for Europe (July 6), and on the voyage over I had been anxiously awaiting word on the results." Memoirs, I, 415. At Potsdam, prior to receiving the test results, Truman reportedly remarked, with respect to the test and negotiations with the Russians: "If it explodes as I think it will, I'll certainly have a hammer on those boys." Lamont, Day of Trinity, 228. Hewlett and Anderson claim that Truman, with the atomic test date in mind, told Stimson in a meeting on June 6 that he had postponed the Potsdam Conference until July 15. The New World, 360.

[38]Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 639. Senator Vandenberg, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, discovered in the summer of 1947 that Great Britain's consent was required for any use of the atomic bomb by a secret executive agreement made by FDR and Churchill at the Quebec Conference. In January, 1948, the British agreed to rescind this requirement. Vandenberg, Private Papers, 359-61.

[39]Lamont, Day of Trinity, 146.

suggested to the President that he might invite further talks with the Soviet Union relative to a postwar policy on atomic energy, but they did not think Truman, if asked, should divulge any particulars yet.[40]

At lunch with Churchill on July 18, Truman discussed with the Prime Minister what Stalin should be told about the bomb. Churchill had been informed on the previous day of the successful test of what he would later refer to as "the Second Coming in Wrath."[41] Since it was settled that Stalin had to be informed, the discussion dealt only with how much he should be told and when to tell him. Truman said he would simply disclose to the Soviet Premier the fact of the weapon without going into any detail. "I think," Churchill recalls Truman saying, "I had best just tell him after one of our meetings that we have an entirely novel form of bomb. . . , which we think will have decisive effects upon the Japanese will to continue the war." Churchill agreed.[42]

As the evening session ended at Potsdam on July 24, Truman approached the Soviet Premier privately: "I casually mentioned to Stalin that we had a new weapon of

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[40] Ibid., 136-37.

[41] Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 637-38.

[42] Ibid., 640-41. See also, Truman, Mr. Citizen, 201; Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 386.

unusual destructiveness." The President was quite surprised by the reaction he received: "The Russian Premier showed no special interest. All he said was that he was glad to hear it and hoped we would make "good use of it against the Japanese!"[43] Churchill, watching the scene from a few yards away, but out of earshot, remembers that Stalin's face remained "gay and genial" and that "he seemed to be delighted."[44] As they waited together for their cars a few moments later, Churchill asked the President, "How did it go?"

"He never asked a question," Truman replied.[45]

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[43]Truman, Memoirs, I, 416. See also, Neumann, After Victory, 175; Feis, Between War and Peace, 177.

[44]Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 670.

[45]Ibid. Secretary of State Byrnes, who was also present, corroborates both Truman and Churchill's accounts of the brief encounter with Stalin. Speaking Frankly, 263. All three men were clearly surprised by Stalin's mild reaction to Truman's information about the atomic bomb. In their accounts, Truman and Byrnes did not note the possibility that Stalin already knew much more than Truman told him. Churchill stated emphatically that Stalin's response was proof that the Soviet Union had not penetrated the project's security prior to this meeting. Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 669-70. Cabell Phillips, in his biography of Truman, says Stalin and other Soviet officials, ". . . had enjoyed for more than a year fairly accurate and up-to-date intelligence. . . ," on the Manhattan Project. See his, Truman Presidency, 53. Lansing Lamont, Day of Trinity (passim.) makes frequent detailed references to Soviet espionage activities at Alomogordo. Herbert Feis believes that Stalin knew the weapon was being developed and that it was close to success, but that he was not yet aware of its full power. Japan Subdued, 90.

There was no further discussion with the Soviet Union at Potsdam with regard to atomic energy.

Once the reports were in confirming the success of the bomb test, Truman met with his chief military advisers on July 17,[46] All present were conversant with the mid-July status reports prepared by the intelligence branch of the War Department General Staff. The reports estimated Japanese strength in the home islands at 2,000,000, on the Asian mainland and Formosa, another 2,000,000, and 600,000 more scattered about in small groupings for a total of just under 5,000,000.[47] The intelligence reports, while taking cognizance of the Japanese mediation feelers to Russia, indicated that they discerned no real weakening in Japanese determination to continue the war. As Stimson put it . . .

> As we understood it in July, there was a very strong possibility that the Japanese Government might determine upon resistance to the end, in all the areas of the Far East under its control. In such an event the Allies would be faced with the enormous task of destroying an armed force of five million men and five thousand suicide aircraft, belonging to a race which had already amply demonstrated its ability to fight literally to the death.[48]

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[46]Those present were Stimson, Byrnes, Leahy, Marshall, Arnold and King. Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 248.

[47]Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 618.

[48]Ibid. There is no clear agreement on Japanese determination to fight on. One who has taken exception to Stimson's interpretation of these reports is Alexander H. Leighton, who was Co-Director, Foreign Morale Analysis

The invasion plans Truman had approved in June called for a combined American military and naval force estimated at 5,000,000 men.[49] The President asked each of his advisers present for their opinions on using the bomb. General Marshall opposed a surprise attack, but he told Truman that if the bomb brought about surrender without an invasion, it would mean saving a quarter of a million American lives along with the lives of millions of Japanese.[50] There was apparently little or no discussion

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Division, Bureau of Overseas Intelligence. Leighton holds that Japan would have surrendered without the atomic bomb or Russian intervention and prior to the planned invasion of the home islands. See Leighton, "Was Atomic-Bombing of Japan Necessary?," Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch, April 20, 1947. Leighton was a member of a survey team that inspected Japan at the end of the war. What he says is quite similar to the conclusion reached by the United States Strategic Bombing Survey Report, reprinted in Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), The Truman Administration, 45. D. F. Fleming believes that Soviet intervention alone would have been sufficient to force Japanese surrender. The Cold War, I, 305.

[49]Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 619.

[50]Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 248. Truman's figures on the estimate of lives that would be lost by invasion vary. In his Memoirs (I, 417) he said it would cost one half million American lives. Earlier (p. 314), he recorded the JCS casualty estimates as just, "grim." Steinberg, in Man from Missouri (p. 259) quotes Truman as saying the bomb saved half a million Americans and as many Japanese. In a 1965 television broadcast, Truman referred to "saving hundreds of thousands of American lives." Quoted in Lamont, Day of Trinity, 303. In a speech to newly-elected congressmen at the Carlton Hotel in Washington on April 6, 1949, the President spoke of saving two hundred thousand American lives and about three or four hundred thousand of the enemy. Item No. 70, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1949, 200.

about the possibility of a specific warning to the Japanese that this new weapon was to be used against them.[51] "The consensus of opinion," Truman said in summarizing this meeting, "was that the bomb should be used."[52]

The last two weeks of July must have been exhausting to the President. He was engaged in daily complex negotiations over the conference table with Great Britain and the Soviet Union, determining the structure of the postwar world; he was meeting often with Stimson, Byrnes and Churchill with regard to the language of the Potsdam Ultimatum; he was pressed from the seventeenth to the twenty-fourth to make a decision respecting the issuance of orders for the atomic-bombing of Japan. He had been

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[51] "Marshall . . . was deeply disturbed at the idea of a surprise atomic attack on Japan," according to Lamont, Day of Trinity, 264. Louis Morton says that, "No one at this time, or later in the conference, raised the question of whether the Japanese should be informed of the existence of the bomb." Morton, "Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," 511. Interviewed in 1960, General Eisenhower said that when informed by Stimson of the bomb he said he hoped that American would not be the first to use such a weapon, especially against an almost-defeated nation. Feis, Japan Subdued, footnote, 178.

[52] Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 248. It may be recalled that while the participants in this meeting agreed that the bomb should be used, the decision was also made to continue with preparations for the invasion of Japan. The military advisers to the President were by no means convinced that the bomb would end the war.

informed that the bomb could be used on or after August 1, but the preparations required that his authorization to proceed be given prior to July 25.[53]

As he moved toward a decision on the bomb, Truman continued to consult with his military and civilian advisers: "I gave careful thought to what my advisers had counseled. I wanted to weigh all the possibilities and implications."[54] The President also talked about it with Churchill, with Leahy and Marshall present. "There never was," Churchill recalls, "a moment's discussion as to whether the atomic bomb should be used or not."[55] Churchill was very emphatic on this point, as his further discussion of this session with Truman indicates:

> The final decision now lay in the main with President Truman, who had the weapon; but I never doubted what it would be, nor have I ever doubted since that he was right. . . . the decision whether or not to use the atomic bomb to compel the surrender of Japan was never even an issue. There was unanimous, automatic,

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[53]Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 389-90.

[54]Raymond G. O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," in Edgar E. Robinson, et. al., Powers of the President in Foreign Affairs, 1945-1965 (San Francisco: The Commonwealth Club of California, 1966), 29. Hereinafter cited as O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power."

[55]Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 638-39. ". . . when I talked to Churchill he unhesitatingly told me that he favored the use of the atomic bomb if it might aid to end the war." Truman, Memoirs, I, 419.

> unquestioned agreement around our table; nor did I ever hear the slightest suggestion that we should do otherwise.[56]

The President had not only to worry out the final decision to bomb Japan, he had also to pick which cities to use as targets. He wanted to be sure, he said, that the bomb was used against a military target. That way, Truman reasoned, he would be employing ". . . a weapon of war in the manner prescribed by the laws of war."[57] He had earlier instructed Stimson to tell the War Department Target Committee to propose only cities of "prime military importance." Essentially, this meant a city with industrial plants producing military equipment. All of this was in conformance with the Interim Committee's recommendations with which the JCS had concurred. Stimson brought the target recommendations to Truman, and, along with Marshall and Arnold, a list of four cities was compiled. Listed in order of their military importance, they were Hiroshima, Kokura, Niigata, and Nagasaki.[58]

In the preface to his Memoirs, Truman commented

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[56]Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 639.

[57]Truman, Memoirs, I, 420.

[58]Ibid. See also, Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 248; Lamont, Day of Trinity, 264-65; Current, Secretary Stimson, 233. Current errs in placing Truman in Washington during this period.

from his own experience on the times a president is confronted by crucial decisions: "No one can make decisions for him. No one can know all the processes and stages of his thinking."[59] He concluded his thoughts on this subject with the following insightful line: "To be President of the United States is to be lonely, very lonely at times of great decisions."[60] Although surrounded by his advisers as they chose the target cities in Japan, Harry Truman must have felt very lonely. The President recalls that after the target selection was completed, "I then agreed to the use of the atomic bomb. . . ."[61]

With the Commander in Chief's authorization, orders dated July 24, 1945, were dispatched by the War Department to General Carl Spaatz, Commanding General of the Army Strategic Air Force. The orders authorized the 509 Composite Group of the 20th Air Force--a special unit trained for this task--to ". . . deliver its first

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[59] Truman, Memoirs, I, Preface, ix.

[60] Ibid. In a similar vein Truman said: "The Presidential chair is the loneliest place a man can be." See, "Harry S. Truman--The Government Story," Group W television network telecast, July 19, 1969.

[61] Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 248. The date of Truman's decision was probably July 23. A cable from Stimson to George Harrison of the Interim Committee, dated the 23rd, indicated that the bombing decision had now "been confirmed by highest authority." Quoted in Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), The Truman Administration, 25.

special bomb as soon as weather will permit visual bombing after about 3 August 1945 on one of the targets: Hiroshima, Kokura, Niigata and Nagasaki."[62] The orders also stated that additional bombs were to be dropped on the designated targets as soon as they were constructed. Copies of Spaatz's orders were also to be personally delivered by him to General MacArthur and Admiral Nimitz for their information.[63]

Since the order to use the atomic bomb was given prior to the promulgation of the Potsdam Declaration on July 26, it could be assumed that the document was a cynical gesture. The assumption is unwarranted. If the bomb was to be used as soon as it was operational, as advocated by the Interim Committee, then technical necessity required that Truman initiate the orders when he did. The order was not irrevocable, but no further

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[62]Truman, Memoirs, I, 420.

[63]Full text of orders appear in ibid., 420-21; Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), The Truman Administration, 25-26. See also, Feis, Japan Subdued, 91. A copy of the orders was sent to General MacArthur and this was probably his first knowledge of the new weapon. MacArthur said he first learned of the bomb "just prior" to its use on Hiroshima. See Douglas MacArthur, Reminiscences: General of the Army Douglas MacArthur (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), 262. Hereinafter cited as MacArthur, Reminiscences. See also, Charles A. Willoughby and John Chamberlain, MacArthur, 1941-1951 (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1954), 286. Hereinafter cited as Willoughby and Chamberlain, MacArthur.

commands were required from the Commander in Chief or anyone else in the military hierarchy for the bomb to be used on or after August 3.[64] Truman's instructions to Stimson were clear: ". . . the order would stand unless I notified him that the Japanese reply to our ultimatum was acceptable."[65]

The Potsdam Ultimatum, which said nothing about the Emperor and nothing about the atomic bomb, was not rejected by the Japanese. Premier Suzuki told the press he would ignore it, and this, to Truman, was unacceptable. He felt that there was no longer an alternative course.[66] While the Japanese still vainly placed their hopes for a negotiated surrender on the Russians, American technicians were assembling an atomic weapon on Tinian Island in the Marianas. Since the Japanese response gave him no cause

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[64]Schwarz, American Strategy, 58-59; Morton, "Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," 514.

[65]Truman, Memoirs, I, 421.

[66]Ibid. Secretary Stimson felt that Suzuki had rejected the ultimatum: "In the face of this rejection we could only proceed to demonstrate that the ultimatum had meant exactly what it said . . . destruction of Japanese forces and devastation of the homeland." Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 625. Morton errs in saying that following the Suzuki statement: "Truman held off orders on the use of the bomb for a few days." See "Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," 513. As indicated textually, no orders had to be given after the order to General Spaatz, and none were given as far as can be determined from available sources.

to, Truman did not countermand his decision, a decision he said he reached after long and careful study: "It was not an easy decision to make. I did not like the weapon. But I had no qualms if in the long run millions of lives could be saved. The rest is history."[67]

History records that sixty percent of the city of Hiroshima, Japan, was destroyed at 8:15 A.M., August 6, 1945. The B-29 crewmen returning to their base reported that the results exceeded expectations.[68] The results did, indeed, exceed expectations. The predicted twenty thousand that would be killed by the bomb became, in fact, seventy-eight thousand men, women, and children. Thirty-seven thousand others were injured; thirteen thousand were missing. One single bomb in one apocalyptic minute had transfored Hiroshima from the eighth largest city in Japan into a village.[69] Receiving the news aboard the U.S.S. Augusta on route back from the Potsdam Conference, Truman told a group of sailors around him

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[67]Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 248-49.

[68]General Spaatz to General Arnold, August 6, 1945, RG18, AAF, 312.1--Operations Letters--1945, Vol. 3, National Archives. The time noted is for Japan. It was 7:15 P.M., August 5, in Washington.

[69]Lamont, Day of Trinity, 265. In a research study in progress at Hiroshima's Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Biology, sociologist Minoru Yuzaki offers "highly tentative projections" placing the city's death toll at 200,000. Time, XCVI (August 10, 1970), 31.

"this is the greatest thing in history."[70]

In a prepared statement released in Washington the same day, the President told the nation of the bomb and warned the Japanese that more would follow:

> Sixteen hours ago an American airplane dropped one bomb on Hiroshima, an important Japanese Army base. That bomb had more power than 20,000 tons of T.N.T. . . .
>
> The Japanese began the war from the air at Pearl Harbor. They have been repaid many fold. And the end is not yet. . . .
>
> We are now prepared to obliterate more rapidly and completely every productive enterprise the Japanese have above ground in any city. . . . Let their be no mistake; we shall completely destroy Japan's power to amek war.
>
> It was to spare the Japanese people from utter destruction that the ultimatum of July 26 was issued at Potsdam. Their leaders promptly rejected that ultimatum. If they do not now accept our terms they may expect a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen on this earth.[71]

On August 9, seventy-five hours after the attack on Hiroshima, the seaport of Nagasaki was atom-bombed. The casualties numbered above 100,000. A one square-mile area was instantaneously cratered by the force of the blast

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[70]Truman, Memoirs, I, 421; Byrnes, Speaking Frankly, 264.

[71]Item No. 93, Statement by the President Announcing the Use of the A-Bomb at Hiroshima, August 6, 1945. Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 197-200. Full text is reprinted as Document No. 1315, in Richard L. Watson, Jr., (ed.), The United States in the Contemporary World, 1945-1962 (Vol. IX of George H. Knoles (ed.), Sources in American History, 9 vols., New York: The Free Press, 1965), 42-45. Hereinafter cited as Watson (ed.), United States in the Contemporary World. An abridged version of the statement appears in Truman, Memoirs, I, 422-23.

which detonated some two thousand feet above the city. The bomb, much more powerful than the device used on Hiroshima, left a pall of radioactive dust over Nagasaki that did not dissipate for several days.[72]

Questions must inevitably arise about the time span between the dropping of the bombs. Some believe Truman should have waited longer; Nagasaki was destroyed before the Japanese government could react to the reports from Hiroshima.[73] Truman, of course, thinks the time was sufficient. He gave them three days to surrender, he said, and would have given them two more were it not for unfavorable weather forecasts.[74]

The idea of dropping two bombs, rather than dropping one and waiting a substantial interval for Japanese reaction had been developed by military planners in December of 1944. The reasoning was that the first bomb would demonstrate the magnitude of the weapon; the second use of the weapon would be proof to the Japanese the first was not an experimental fluke and that the

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[72]Truman, Memoirs, I, 426. See also, Lamont, Day of Trinity, 266; Buchanan, United States and World War II, II, 585.

[73]Schwarz, American Strategy, 59.

[74]Truman, Memoirs, I, 426. The original date for the second bomb drop was August 11, but meteorologists indicated that the targets would not be visible by then. Feis, Japan Subdued, footnote, 116. See also, Schwarz, American Strategy, 59.

United States had the capacity to continue these attacks.[75] General Groves liked the second-bomb strategy and described the concept to Truman, who neither accepted nor rejected it. As Groves said: "There was never any definite approval of this conclusion and there was no limitation placed in our plans on the number or bombs to be used."[76] When the Commander in Chief approved the orders to General Spaatz to use the atom bomb on Japan--which Groves had drafted--he tacitly accepted a multiple-bomb strategy. The order is clear on this: "Additional bombs will be delivered on the above targets as soon as made ready by the project staff."[77] Herbert Feis has written that Generals Groves and Spaatz, ". . . and all their colleagues, military and civil, were eager to strike the second blow as quickly as possible to get the most impressive effect and hasten surrender."[78] Truman did have an order sent to Spaatz, probably on August 7, telling him to continue the bombing as ordered

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[75]Lamont, Day of Trinity, 304-305. The idea originated with Admiral William R. Purnell of the Military Policy Committee.

[76]Ibid., 305.

[77]Truman, Memoirs, I, 420.

[78]Feis, Japan Subdued, footnote, 116.

unless advised to the contrary by the President.[79]

As Truman had ordered the situation, the atomic attacks were to continue unabated, with the frequency of the attacks to be determined by field commanders, subject only to the availability of fissionable material and weather conditions over Japan. The process would continue until Japan accepted unconditional surrender.

In the course of discussions with Columbia University students in 1959, Truman provided some interesting insights into his thinking on the use of the bomb:

> Student: How about the decision on dropping the atomic bomb?
>
> President Truman: That was not any decision that you had to worry about. It was just the same as getting a bigger gun than the other fellow had to win a war and that's what it was used for. Nothing else but an artillery weapon. . . .
>
> The atom bomb was no "great decision". . . . It was merely another powerful weapon in the arsenal of righteousness. The dropping of the bombs stopped the war, saved millions of lives. It is just the same as artillery on our side. Napoleon said that victory is always on the side of the artillery. It was a purely military decision to end the war.[80]

In another portion of his session with the students, Truman was asked about the timing of the second bomb. He

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[79]Truman, Memoirs, I, 423. Groves' deputy on Tinian, General Thomas F. Farrell, was in direct field command of the bombings. He believed that it was Groves' wish that a second atom bomb should follow the first as rapidly as possible. With this in mind, Farrell "decided to rush and risk the attack on the 9th rather than wait out the forecasted worse weather." Feis, Japan Subdued, footnote, 116.

[80]Truman Speaks, 67, 93.

does not actually answer the question in the dialogue quoted below, preferring instead to attack his critics. But that he did endorse the second (or, multiple)-bomb strategy can be reasonably inferred from his remarks:

> Student: Mr. President, would you be willing to explain to us what led you to believe that the first atomic bomb had failed to achieve peace with Japan and made it necessary to drop the second one?
>
> President Truman: It was a military procedure, under which the armed forces decided that it would be necessary to destroy both towns . . . and the objective was, as nearly as we possibly could determine, to shut off the supplies to the Japanese. . . .
>
> Student: The reason I asked this was that it seemed to me the second bomb came pretty soon after the first one, two or three days.
>
> President Truman: That is right. We were destroying the centers, the factories that were making munitions. Just a military maneuver, that is all.
>
> All this uproar about what we did and what could have been stopped--should we take these wonderful Monday morning quarterbacks, the experts who are supposed to be right? They don't know what they are talking about. I was there. I did it. I would to it again.[81]

If history is to be any more than reportage of significant past events, then those who write of a nation's past must--of necessity--offer critical judgments; they must assess the wisdom of decisions made and judge the men who made them in the process. By the nature of the craft itself then, historians become the "Monday morning quarterbacks" of Truman's prosaic phrase. In one of his own works, Mr. Citizen, Truman criticized

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[81] Ibid., 73.

historians in general for their "astonishing" inaccuracy and "deliberate distortions." As a specific example of what he meant, Truman wrote: "The speculations and assumptions . . . about my feelings on the use of the atomic bomb on Nagasaki and Hiroshima were as contradictory as the varying stories written on the subject, and most of them had no foundation in fact."[82] Even with this caution, the speculations and assumptions, as with this study, shall continue for many generations yet to come, for Truman opened the door of the nuclear age, and the world does not yet perceive what lies beyond--the lady or the tiger.

Certain questions naturally occur in consideration of the use of nuclear weapons. Was the atomic bomb

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[82]Truman, Mr. Citizen, 183-84. Given his refreshing pugnacity, Truman would never have fully agreed with any view of his decision, but given his knowledge of history, he would understand the reasons such judgments must be made. In his autobiography he devoted ten pages to passing judgment on his predecessors in the presidential office (with Andrew Jackson--predictably--emerging as his favorite). Truman, Memoirs, II, 193-202. Truman had quite an amazing grasp of historical data, with which he dazzled everyone from his secretary to Winston Churchill, himself a reknowned amateur historian. Truman's own historical allusions and the impressions of others on his talent in the field are numerous. See, for example, his Memoirs, I, 460; II, 172-74; Truman, Mr. Citizen, 125-26, 162, 167-68, 194-95; Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 481; Koenig (ed.), Truman Administration, 88-89; O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 24-25; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 134; Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 10-11, 81-82; Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 355-56; Diary Entry, November 9, 1945, Smith Papers, Truman Library.

necessary to defeat Japan without a costly invasion? If the first was necessary, was the second bomb also required? Was the time span between the bombs sufficient? Can all of Truman's command decisions on the employment of the bomb be justified? It would be easy to answer "no" to all these questions. While the maimed, disfigured children of Hiroshima live and a new generation of children breathe air polluted by the radioactive fallout from the testing of bombs over one thousand times more powerful than those which scarred Japan, the urge to damn those who advocated and initiated atomic warfare is strong. But any reasonable inquiry into the complex of circumstances involved in the atomic decision reveals that no absolutely affirmative or negative judgment is valid without qualification.

That Japan would have conditionally surrendered without the atomic bomb being used and prior to the invasion of Kyushu in November has been well-demonstrated, particularly by postwar research into the Japanese records.[83] Some high-ranking military officials have

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[83]An excellent study of the subject is Feis, Japan Subdued. The distinguished diplomatic historian, Richard W. Leopold said in a 1970 interview: "I do not think there is any doubt that if those who made the decision knew what we know now, the bomb would not have been dropped." Leopold, "The United States in World Affairs, 1941-1968," in John A. Garraty (ed.), Interpreting American History: Conversations with Historians (2 vols., New York: Macmillan, 1970), II, 230. Hereinafter cited as Leopold,

said, after the fact, that there was no military need to drop the bomb--among them, Generals Arnold and MacArthur and Admirals Halsey and Leahy.[84] Eisenhower was opposed before the bomb's use and Marshall had serious reservations, as previously noted.[85]

Truman and all his military and civil advisers were fully aware through intelligence reports that Japan was actively seeking to end the war for some time prior to the decision at Potsdam. That there was little effort made, aside from the ambiguously-worded Potsdam Declaration, to follow up on the possibility of a political settlement is quite clear.[86] Perhaps the President did not wish such a conclusion to the war.

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"United States in World Affairs." Norman Cousins and Thomas K. Finletter have written: "The first error was the atomic bombing of Hiroshima." See, "A Beginning for Sanity," Saturday Review of Literature, XXXIX, No. 24 (June 15, 1946), 6. Hereinafter cited as Cousins and Finletter, "A Beginning for Sanity."

[84]Fleming, The Cold War, I, 297. Admiral Leahy wrote that the atomic bomb, ". . . was of no material assistance in our war against Japan. The Japanese were already defeated and ready to surrender." Leahy, I Was There (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1950), 441. Hereinafter cited as Leahy, I Was There.

[85]See footnote number 51, supra.

[86]Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 628. Schwarz believes that these Japanese peace overtures were "never even considered" by Truman and his advisers. American Strategy, 58.

If the first bomb was unnecessary, then it follows that the second was doubly so, particularly in the brief interim between them. Even accepting the need for the Hiroshima bomb, it is difficult to understand the haste with which the second bomb was dropped. Had the Japanese been told after the first bomb that the attacks were to be suspended temporarily, but would be resumed at some specific date if they had not by then surrendered unconditionally, there seems little reason to doubt that they would have submitted. The second-bomb strategy may have been valid when proposed in 1944, but in August 1945, Nagasaki was not needed to convince the Japanese their cause was doomed. "It was my responsibility as President," Truman has said, "to force the Japanese warlords to come to terms as quickly as possible with the minimum loss of lives."[87] And again, in a radio message to the nation, the President said, "We have used it (the atomic bomb) in order to shorten the agony of war. . . ."[88] It was

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[87]Truman, Mr. Citizen, 202.

[88]Item No. 97, Radio Report to the American People on the Potsdam Conference, August 9, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 212. The line cited was actually written by Archibald MacLeish, then an assistant Secretary of State, in some suggestions to Samuel Rosenman, a White House adviser, who wrote the speech for Truman. MacLeish to Rosenman, August, 1945, Papers of Samuel I. Rosenman, Subject File, Report to the Nation on Potsdam Conference, Truman Library. Hereinafter cited as Rosenman Papers.

excessive haste in employing the second bomb that brought great agony to the people of Nagasaki.

The distinction between military and civilian targets disappeared on both sides at some point in the midst of World War II. American fire-bombing of Japanese cities had already killed over one-quarter of a million civilians and left over nine million more homeless.[89] In the sense that the atomic bombs were just bigger, more economical and efficient devices for destroying enemy cities, no justification for their use was warranted by either historical experience or prevailing international practice. The belligerent nations were all engaged in research and development of more efficient and sophisticated war machines; the prevailing view being that nations could use any weapon not explicitly barred by international agreements. Thus, although the Truman Administration showed no particular concern over this subject, the legal and historical precedents did exist for using the bomb.[90] The only genuinely effective deterrent to the use of insidious weapons has been the fear of

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[89]In recommending the fire bombings of Japan and the Use of the atomic bomb, Stimson was, according to Bundy: ". . . implicitly confessing that there could be no significant limits to the horrors of modern war." Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 632-33.

[90]Feis, Japan Subdued, 179.

retaliation in kind, as the absence of poison gas in the Second World War demonstrates.[91]

When the horrendous effects of the atomic bombs became public knowledge, Truman was subjected to extreme criticism from many nations. As the years passed and the nuclear arms race accelerated, many have looked back ruefully to the initial act and bitterly condemned the Commander in Chief who ordered the bombings.[92] Truman's public posture never wavered; he did not attempt to deny his responsibility: "The final decision of where and when to use the atomic bomb was up to me," Truman wrote in his Memoirs. "Let there be no mistake about it. I

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[91]The insidious factor in atomic weapons is, of course, the radioactive fallout. As Leahy said: "It (the bomb) is a poisonous thing that kills people by its deadly radioactive reaction, more than by the explosive force it develops." I Was There, 441. It has not been possible to determine how much information on radioactivity had been made available to Truman prior to the use of this weapon.

[92]James MacGregor Burns, Presidential Government: The Crucible of Leadership (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1966), 215-16. Hereinafter cited as Burns, Presidential Government. Criticism of use of the bomb within the United States was minimal in the early postwar period. For example, a poll taken in October, 1945, showed only four percent indicating the bomb should not have been used. Fourteen percent favored a test on an unpopulated area first. Fifty-four percent accepted the two-bomb tactic used and twenty-three percent felt Truman should have ". . . quickly used many more of them before Japan had a chance to surrender." Elmo Roper, You and Your Leaders: Their Actions and Your Reactions, 1936-1956 (New York: William Morrow, 1957), 124. Hereinafter cited as Roper, You and Your Leaders.

regarded the bomb as a military weapon and never had any doubt that it should be used."[93]

While the American system does accord ultimate authority to the Commander in Chief, in this instance, there is ample reason to believe that it would have been very difficult for Truman to have decided otherwise. He was new to command, overawed by the reputations of Stimson and Marshall, and untutored in international politics. The flow of information about the extant conditions which would determine how he would decide demonstrated a type of tunnel vision which admitted no feasible alternative. The military intelligence he received created a false syllogism, by providing the President with almost exclusively-military premises that led him to an inevitable acceptance of a military conclusion: use the bomb.

Urs Schwarz, in his incisive study of American politico-military thinking has described this decision-making process:

> The events of July and August 1945, preceding the decision to use the bomb and its actual dropping, are further instances of by now well-known strategic thinking and procedure. The decision-makers

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[93]Truman, Memoirs, I, 419. Truman repeatedly avowed that it was his decision alone, often in almost exactly the same language. See, for example, Truman, Mr. Citizen, 202; Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 248-49; Phillips, "Truman at 75," New York Times, May 3, 1959; Truman Speaks, 73.

> concentrate, since they are engaged in war, on military aspects, almost to the exclusion of any considerations of policy. And the military aspects are dominated by two viewpoints: end the war by destroying the enemy's power to resist; end the war quickly by a display of overwhelming power, so that American casualties may be reduced.
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> Political means, even when suggested, even when within easy reach, are neglected. Once the military decision is taken, it remains for the military commander on the spot to put it into effect. His is the final word. Even decisions that finally may turn out to be of the utmost political importance are left to him; the political authority has abdicated in his favor.[94]

Harry Truman did not so much decide to use the atomic bomb as he decided to acquiesce in a vast project that had cost billions of dollars and hundreds of thousands of man-hours and that promised a speedy, life-saving, dramatic finale to the most costly struggle in the history of international warfare. The atom bomb project had developed an irresistible momentum of its own, with the implication always clear that once the bomb was perfected, it would be used against America's enemies. Had Truman desired to stop this process, he would have had to justify his decision to the bomb-makers and the generals. He would have had to argue for the uncertain ground of future implications of the bomb's use; arguments that James MacGregor Burns said "posed such huge

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[94]Schwarz, American Strategy, 59-60. Schwarz's attack on such thinking is substantially the same as that used by Bundy in defense of Stimson. Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 629-30.

imponderables and contingencies that they defied easy calculation."[95] The proposed military solution, on the other hand, offering an immediate, direct, readily-calculable result, was bound to have appeal to the President. Truman was a practical politician, used to direct action and not given to abstract reasoning.[96] And so, taken together, the system, circumstances and his own predisposition led Truman to accept a military conclusion. After the President discussed with the Secretary of War and others the cities to be marked as targets, he recalls, "I then agreed to the use of the atomic bomb. . . ."[97] The decision to make the atomic bomb was, indeed, the decision to use it.

It would be unreasonable to fault Truman for not having the vision to see what the passage of decades has revealed. Nor is it at all probable that any other decision he made on the bomb would have prevented the subsequent nuclear arms race. But his acceptance of the specious arguments against a test demonstration and against a specific warning in the Potsdam Declaration can be greatly regretted, if not condemned. The wisdom of his

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[95]Burns, Presidential Government, 216.

[96]Ibid., 215-16.

[97]Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 248. Emphasis supplied.

open-ended order to General Spaatz to continue the bombing until otherwise informed may also be questioned. What cannot be questioned was that when he did act, Truman was convinced his was the correct course: "I could not worry about what history would say about my personal morality, I made the only decision I ever knew how to make. I did what I thought was right."[98]

One last factor must be added in assessing the influences on Truman's thinking in his use of this extraordinary weapon of war. So far as can be determined, in all of his public utterances regarding his decision, he never varied from the position that he had no regrets over using this "purely military weapon" against what were essentially military targets. But he may have had private doubts: David Lilienthal, Director of the Atomic Energy Commission, recorded in his journal a White House meeting in mid-summer, 1948. During the meeting, Secretary of the Air Force Stuart Symington was recounting for the President a conversation he had with a scientist at the Los Alamos laboratory. Symington was amused when the physicist told him that he did not think the United States should ever use the nuclear weapons being developed at the laboratory. "I don't either," Truman said. Lilienthal's memory of the President's elaboration on this statement follows:

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[98]Quoted in Lamont, Day of Trinity, 303.

> I don't think we ought to use this thing unless we absolutely have to. It is a terrible thing to order the use of something that (here he looked down at his desk, rather reflectively) that is so terribly destructive, destructive beyond anything we have ever had. You have got to understand that this isn't a military weapon. (I shall never forget this particular expression.) It is used to wipe out women and children and unarmed people, and not for military uses. So we have got to treat this differently from rifles and cannon and ordinary things like that.[99]

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[99]David E. Lilienthal, The Atomic Energy Years, 1945-1950, Vol. II of The Journals of David E. Lilienthal (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1964), 391. Hereinafter cited as Lilienthal, Atomic Energy Years. (The parenthetical interpolations are by Lilienthal.) In discussing military problems with Truman just after World War II, Budget Director Smith reminded the President that he now had the atomic bomb to fall back on. Truman replied: "Yes, but I am not sure it can ever be used." Diary Entry, October 5, 1945, Smith Papers, Smith Diary, copy in Truman Library of original in Franklin D. Roosevelt Library. Or again, when talking of the bomb in private (in 1949), the President mentioned a book by a British author which contended that the bomb was just another weapon of war. Truman said that was "a very serious mistake," and added: "this isn't just another weapon, not just another bomb." Journal Entry, February 14, 1949, Lilienthal, Atomic Energy Years, 474. When Admiral William S. Parsons wrote an article for the Saturday Evening Post to the same effect--that the atomic bomb was just another weapon--President Truman, acting through his Special Counsel, Clark Clifford, ordered that the article not be published as it was contrary to the national interests. Memoranda, Lilienthal to Clifford, December 14, 1948; Clifford to the President, December 29, 1948; Clifford to Forrestal, December 31, 1948, all in Papers of Clark M. Clifford, Atomic Energy, Truman Library. Hereinafter cited as Clifford Papers. When asked in a November, 1950, press conference if the bomb was being considered for use in Korea, Truman said: "There has always been active consideration of its use. I don't want to see it used. It is a terrible weapon, and it should not be used on innocent men, women, and children who have nothing whatever to do with this military aggression. That happens when it is used." Item No. 295, Press Conference, November 30, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 727.

On August 10, 1945, Radio Tokyo broadcast a message accepting the terms of the Potsdam Declaration, ". . . with the understanding that said declaration does not comprise any demand which prejudices the prerogatives of His Majesty as a sovereign ruler."[100] Truman called a meeting that morning with Admiral Leahy and Secretaries Byrnes, Forrestal and Stimson to discuss a response. The discussion centered around the reservation expressed by the Japanese with regard to the Emperor. The Secretary of War, who had long advocated retention of the Emperor, told the President that allowing the Emperor to govern under American supervision, would greatly facilitate both the surrender of all Japanese forces and the postwar administration of the country.[101] Admiral Leahy agreed with Stimson, but Secretary Byrnes was against such a suggestion. He wanted to hold to the unconditional surrender formula. He also pointed out that many major American officials had condemned the Japanese imperial system and the Emperor during the war and that to accept this condition now would appear to be a sharp reversal of policy. Truman was inclined to agree with Byrnes. Navy Secretary Forrestal settled the dilemma by suggesting that the reply be drafted so as to reaffirm the Potsdam

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[100]Quoted in Truman, Memoirs, I, 427.

[101]Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 627.

Declaration but reassure the Japanese that the Emperor would be retained. Forrestal was proposing that the response contradict itself by accepting the Japanese condition while demanding unconditional surrender. Truman liked the suggestion and ordered Byrnes to prepare a draft statement along these lines.[102] Truman further ordered that the war effort against Japan was to continue at current levels until further notice, except that no atomic bombs were to be employed without his express permission.[103]

The Secretary of State's draft response to Japan, since referred to as the Byrnes Note, was ready for a cabinet meeting on the afternoon of August 10, its apt phrases walking the thin line of Forrestal's suggestion. Truman approved the note, and its text was radioed to the Allied capitals of London, Moscow and Chunking for approval.[104] The Soviet Union, having declared war on

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[102]Byrnes, Speaking Frankly, 209; Truman, Memoirs, I, 428. See also, Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 626-27; Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 125.

[103]Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 405.

[104]Byrnes, Speaking Frankly, 209-10; Arnold A. Rogow, Victim of Duty: A Study of James Forrestal (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1966), 145-46. Hereinafter cited as Rogow, Victim of Duty. See also, Truman, Memoirs, I, 428-29; Buchanan, United States and World War II, II, 592-93; Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 627. Full text of the "Byrnes Note" is printed in Herbert Feis, Contest Over Japan (New York: W. W. Norton, 1967), 162-63. Hereinafter cited as Feis, Contest Over Japan.

Japan on August 8,[105] accepted the text of the Byrnes Note after some half-hearted struggling with Ambassador Harriman over the Soviet desire to share military control of Japan with the United States.[106] England and China readily agreed to the text of the Byrnes Note which was then forwarded to the Japanese by the Swiss Chargé on August 11, 1945.[107] On the fourteenth, having received Japan's acceptance of the Allied terms, the President told a news conference: "I deem this reply a full acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration which specifies the unconditional surrender of Japan."[108] While Truman spoke, his message ordering a cease fire was being transmitted to all operational forces in the Pacific.[109]

For the next two weeks, Truman remained preoccupied with preparing for peace and beginning the complex demobilization process. His very first act after announcing

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[105]Averill Harriman to Truman, August 9, 1945, quoted in Truman, Memoirs, I, 425-26; Item No. 94, Press Conference, August 8, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 200. The Russian declaration was effective as of the following day, August 9.

[106]Harriman to Truman, August 11, 1945, quoted in Truman, Memoirs, I, 430-31, 432.

[107]Truman, Memoirs, I, 429-30, 432.

[108]Item No. 100, Press Conference, August 14, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 216. For text of Japanese surrender message, see ibid., 217-18. See also, Truman, Memoirs, I, 435-37; Byrnes, Speaking Frankly, 210.

[109]Truman, Memoirs, I, 438.

Japanese acceptance of the surrender terms was to order Selective Service to cut the draft call by 30,000 per month. In the same message he promised to release up to five and one-half million men from military duty within eighteen months. The pressure to accelerate troop demobilization was one of the first of many postwar military problems with political complications facing the Aministration.[110]

The President ordered the Joint Chiefs of Staff to give maximum publicity to the surrender ceremonies, which, with obvious personal pleasure, he directed take place aboard the battleship, U.S.S. Missouri.[111] Another obvious choice for Truman, although one that would not remain a constant source of pleasure, was the designation of General MacArthur as Supreme Commander in Japan. Through the terms of the surrender document and the various directives Truman caused to be issued to MacArthur, the General became the virtual ruler of the Japanese nation, as well as Supreme Commander of all American military forces in the Far East.[112]

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[110]Item No. 101, Statement by the President Announcing a Reduction in the Draft, August 14, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 218-19. See also, Truman, Memoirs, I, 435.

[111]Truman to Joint Chiefs of Staff, August 13, 1945, quoted in Truman, Memoirs, I, 451-52.

[112]Marshall to MacArthur, August 13, 1945; Marshall to MacArthur (undated, apx. August 14, 1945); JCS to MacArthur, September 6, 1945, all quoted in ibid., 438-39, 453, 457.

Late in August Truman released to the press the Army and Navy fact-finding reports on the Pearl Harbor attack. The President told the press that "there is nothing there that needs to be covered up. . . ," but it seems he also hoped to end widespread speculation on the subject which was then current.[113] When Congress created a Joint Committee to investigate Pearl Harbor, Truman proved his sincerity by ordering the heads of the State, War and Navy departments, the Joint Chiefs, and others involved, to make full disclosure of information to the committee.[114] Conversely, Truman muzzled the same military advisers concerning information on the atomic bomb, telling them that nothing regarding the design, production or use of nuclear weapons in warfare was to be

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[113]Item No. 116, Press Conference, August 29, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 243-45.

[114]Truman to Secretary of the Navy (Forrestal), et. al., October 23, 1945, A17-24 (1), Historical Records Division, Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Yard, Washington, D.C. Hereinafter cited as CNO, Navy Yard. Alben Barkley, Chairman of the Joint Committee, finding many reluctant to testify despite the President's memorandum, asked the White House for a more forceful statement. Over Judge Rosenman's objections, Truman will issue such a statement. See Barkley to Matthew J. Connelly, November 2, 1945, Rosenman Papers, Subject File, 1945, Pearl Harbor Investigation, Truman Library; Rosenman to Truman, November 9, 1945, ibid.; Truman to Joint Chiefs of Staff, et. al., November 7, 1945, ibid.; summary, Presidential Actions in re Pearl Harbor Hearings, Murphy Papers, White House Files, Presidential Powers folder, Truman Library.

released without his specific authorization.[115] The President defended this silencing directive by explaining that Hiroshima and Nagasaki were "lesson enough" to him that the world could not afford atomic warfare; and until effective international control could be implemented, the bomb secrets were to be preserved.[116] But a world hungry for news of this "doomsday" weapon could not be completely denied; Truman relented to the extent of allowing release of "general interest" information which, in the opinion of the War Department, would not endanger national security.[117]

The full, fateful days of August finally ended, and September began with the formal surrender ceremonies held in Tokyo Harbor on the first.[118] The war was over, or at least, the fighting had stopped; but a peace treaty with Japan would wait another decade. In order to retain several of the war powers granted to the President as Commander in Chief, Truman did not declare an official end

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[115]Directive, Truman to Secretary of War (Stimson), et. al., August 15, 1945, RG107, Office of the Secretary of War (OSW), 471.6--Atomic Bomb, 031.1, National Archives.

[116]Truman, Memoirs, I, 524.

[117]Memorandum, Truman to Secretary of War (Stimson), et. al., August 30, 1945, RG107, OSW, 471.6--Atomic Bomb, 031.1, National Archives.

[118]September 2, Tokyo time, thirteen hours later than Washington.

to hostilities until December 31, 1946.[119] Legal technicalities to the side, peace had come by mid-August, 1945. The survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki might have bitterly reflected that the peace they knew was like that the Romans visited on the Britons as described by Tacitus: "They make a desert, they call it peace."[120]

Columnist Walter Lippmann, writing shortly after Roosevelt's death, said that "the genius of a good leader is to leave behind him a situation which common sense, without the grace of genius, can deal with successfully."[121] Truman, untouched by genius, but with a full measure of common sense, had done precisely as Lippmann had hoped; he managed to deal with the situation--total war--successfully. For Truman was not trully Commander in

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[119]Presidential Proclamation 2714, December 31, 1946, Federal Register, XII, No. 1, (January 1, 1947). In a speech to Congress on September 6, 1945, Truman had explained the need for continuing the war powers granted to the President. Basically, he said, they would facilitate demobilization and reconversion. Item No. 128, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 276-77. By the December 31 proclamation, Truman terminated fifty-three statutes granting him various war powers. However, the declared "state of military emergency" was not terminated, so he retained numerous extraordinary powers. Col. Robert Wood to all Army Commands, December 31, 1946, RG165, War Department, Plans and Operations, 387.4--(011, Case 62), National Archives.

[120]See "Agricola," Sect. 30.

[121]Walter Lippmann, "Roosevelt Has Gone," New York Herald-Tribune, April 14, 1945.

Chief during the final months of the war, but a steward implementing a pre-determined program. Not even employment of the atomic bomb had been his choice, he merely agreed to complete a process initiated by his predecessor.[122] Truman expressed this view in a letter to the Secretary of the Navy: "I deserve no credit for the victory except the little I contributed as United States Senator. It was already won when I became President and all I had to do was carry out the program. . . ."[123] In his Memoirs, Truman said that September 6, 1945, ". . . is the date that symbolizes for me my assumption of the office of President in my own right."[124]

Whatever Truman's role was in the closing scenes of the Second World War, postwar nuclear weapons policy was his alone to determine. Three developments of the postwar era in this field stand out as worthy of further consideration. First, as the only national leader with control over atomic energy, Truman made a sincere effort

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[122]Wilber Hoare, in his essay on Truman as Commander in Chief, would disagree: ". . . if the ghost of FDR stood at Truman's elbow in Potsdam, at least no dead hand drafted the order that sent the atomic bomb to Hiroshima." See "Truman," 182.

[123]Memorandum, Truman to Forrestal, September 7, 1945, Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 49.

[124]Truman, Memoirs, I, 481. It was on September 6 that Truman sent Congress a message calling for the "Fair Deal," a twenty-one point program of domestic reform legislation.

to turn over this control to the United Nations, but on his terms. Second, as the first Commander in Chief to have control over atomic bombs, he denied to the military services any direct authority over the very weapon that became the bulwark of American military policy. Last, Truman ordered continued testing and development of nuclear weapons and, when the Soviet Union detonated their first test bomb, he ordered a massive program which led to a device far more powerful than the Hiroshima bomb.

The possibilities and problems contemplated in international control of atomic energy were first broached to the President by Secretary of War Stimson in his discussion with Truman on April 25, 1945.[125] One of the reasons for the creation of the Interim Committee (at this meeting) was to advise the President on postwar atomic control policy. Truman says that the "frightful implications" of Hiroshima made him aware ". . . that this revolutionary scientific creation could destroy civilization unless put under control and placed at the service of mankind."[126] In a statement on August 6, announcing the Hiroshima attack and a radio address three days later, the President made his first public appeals for international control and Congressional cooperation. In

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[125]Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 635-36.

[126]Truman, Memoirs, I, 523.

the August 6 statement Truman said that it was the usual policy of the Government to release new scientific information to the public:

> But under present circumstances it is not intended to divulge the technical processes of production or all the military applications, pending further examination of possible methods of protecting us and the rest of the world from the danger of sudden destruction.
>
> I shall recommend that the Congress of the United States consider promptly the establishment of an appropriate commission to control the production and use of atomic power within the United States. I shall . . . make further recommendations to the Congress as to how atomic power can become a powerful and forceful influence towards the maintenance of world peace.[127]

In his radio report on the Potsdam Conference Truman told the nation that the new weapon was "too dangerous to be loose in a lawless world," and because of that, atomic technology would remain secret. . . ,

> . . . until means have been found to control the bomb so as to protect ourselves and the rest of the world from the danger of total destruction.
>
> As far back as last May, Secretary of War Stimson . . . appointed a committee . . . to prepare plans for the future control of this bomb. I shall ask the Congress to cooperate to the end that its production and use be controlled, and that its power be made an overwhelming influence towards world peace.
>
> We must constitute ourselves trustees of this new force--to prevent its misuse . . .
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> It is an awful responsibility which has come to us.[128]

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[127]Item No. 93, Statement by the President Announcing the Use of the A-Bomb at Hiroshima, August 6, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 199-200.

[128]Item No. 97, Radio Report to the American People on the Potsdam Conference, August 9, 1945, ibid., 212-13.

The Secretary of War, charged with making recommendations to the President on future policy, spent a great deal of time going over the Interim Committee reports and reconsidering his own views toward atomic control. The problem was multi-faceted, but every recourse led back to the Soviet Union, the reason being that all the other major nations of the world either knew the secrets of atomic fission, or were in no position to capitalize on such information. Great Britain, Canada and the United States had cooperated in producing the weapon; France and China were too fragmented by the war to organize the massive effort needed to produce the weapon in the foreseeable future; Germany and Japan were under Allied military control and could be prevented from attempting such experiments. The Soviet Union was the only nation with the resources, technological capability and the opportunity to make immediate use of the information. The crux of the problem of international control then, as Stimson viewed it, was whether the Russians could be trusted and if they should be approached directly, or through the offices of the United Nations, which was still in the formative stages. Stimson's recommendations were presented to President Truman in a memorandum dated September 11, 1945.

This memorandum began with an accurate anticipation of Cold War developments. The Secretary pointed out to

the President that the bomb clearly gave the United States an effective, temporary counter to Soviet influence and expansionism. However, the Russians realized this too, and ". . . unless the Soviets are voluntarily invited into the (nuclear) partnership upon a basis of co-operation and trust," Stimson warned, they would certainly be impelled to "feverish activity . . . toward the development of this bomb in what will in effect be a secret armament race of a rather desperate character."[129] Two pivotal passages in this lengthy document merit quotation:

> . . . I consider the problem of our satisfactory relations with Russia as not merely connected with but as virtually dominated by the problem of the atomic bomb. . . . Those relations may be perhaps irretrievably embittered by the way in which we approach the solution of the bomb with Russia. For if we fail to approach them now and merely continue to negotiate with them, having this weapon rather ostentatiously on our hip, their suspicions and their distrust of our purposes and motives will increase. . . .
>
> I emphasize perhaps beyond all other considerations the importance of taking this action with Russia as a proposal of the United States. . . . Action of any international group of nations, including many small nations who have not demonstrated their potential power or responsibility in this war would not, in my opinion, be taken seriously by the Soviets.[130]

Meeting with Truman on September 12, Stimson went over the

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[129]For full text of Stimson's memorandum to the President, September 11, 1945, see Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 642-46.

[130]Ibid., 644-45.

memorandum with him, line by line. What he was proposing, the Secretary explained, was direct negotiations with the U.S.S.R. by the United States (with England's assent) looking toward an agreement by which this nation would impound its present weapons and agree to end further development and ban their use in war, if the British and Russians agreed to do likewise.[131] Stimson did not propose giving the Soviet Union the technological data necessary for manufacturing the weapon, for the President had already determined that this would not be done.[132] But he did suggest that Truman offer to exchange knowledge with the Russians leading to the further development of atomic energy for peaceful applications. Truman agreed with Stimson's approach and asked the Secretary, who had already resigned, to remain until the cabinet meeting on September 21, at which his memorandum would be the sole topic of discussion.[133]

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[131]Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 419.

[132]Truman, Memoirs, I, 524-25. See also, Item No. 164, President's News Conference at Tiptonville, Tennessee, October 8, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 381-82.

[133]Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 419; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 123. Stimson resigned for reasons of health and age. The last cabinet meeting he attended was held on his seventy-eighth birthday. See Item No. 139, Letter Accepting Resignation of Henry L. Stimson as Secretary of War, September 20, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 329; Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 656-57. Truman will appoint Robert P. Patterson, the Under Secretary of War, to replace Stimson.

The cabinet meeting began with Truman asking Stimson to summarize the position stated in his memorandum. In brief, he told them that maintenance of secrecy on the basic principles of atomic energy was impossible. He advocated a scientific exchange and collaboration with the Soviet Union looking toward development of atomic power and a properly safeguarded mutual renunciation of atomic weapons development. The discussion that followed, to use Dean Acheson's phrase, ". . . was unworthy of the subject."[134] Truman confessed to enjoying the heated exchange but apparently got little from it, since he asked those present to submit memoranda stating their views.[135]

The memoranda to the President, while varying widely in detail, generally favored either maintaining an American monopoly on all facets of atomic energy or taking an approach similar to Stimson's. The Joint Chiefs and Robert Patterson, the new Secretary of War, along with Acheson, who represented the State Department, advocated following Stimson's recommendations. The only major Presidential adviser on military policy to oppose this proposition was Secretary of the Navy Forrestal. The Secretary of Treasury and Attorney General agreed with

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[134]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 123. Acheson, as Acting Secretary of State, represented Byrnes at this meeting.

[135]Truman, Memoirs, I, 526-27.

Forrestal, while the Postmaster General and Commerce Secretary generally followed Stimson's reasoning.[136] However, given the divisions and qualifications made, no clear consensus emerged among the President's advisers. Truman was only recognizing a simple truth when he told a reporter a few days later that whatever decision was made on the subject, he, alone, would make the decision.[137]

In a special message to the Congress on October 3, 1945, the President revealed his initial decision on control. He told the Congress that the fate of civilization might well be determined by the success or failure of an international ban on the use and development of atomic weapons. Echoing Stimson's memorandum, Truman said that, although there were great difficulties involved in such a ban, the alternative was a disastrous arms race. The President assured the Congress that the secrets of the manufacturing process to produce bombs would not be divulged. His proposal was to initiate discussions,

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[136]Ibid., 526-28. See also, Rogow, Victim of Duty, 154-55; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 124; Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 420-21; C. Joseph Bernardo and Eugene H. Bacon, American Military Policy: Its Development Since 1775 (2nd ed.; Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: The Stackpole Company, 1961), 462. Hereinafter cited as Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy. See also, Arthur Krock, Memoirs: Sixty Years on the Firing Line (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1968), 248-49. Hereinafter cited as Krock, Memoirs.

[137]Truman, Memoirs, I, 529.

first with Canada and Great Britain, ". . . our associates in this discovery . . . and then with other nations, in an effort to effect agreement on the conditions under which cooperation might replace rivalry in the field of atomic power."[138]

The initial step in atomic control discussions was taken in November when Prime Minister Atlee and W. L. Mackenzie King, the Canadian Prime Minister, met with Truman in Washington. Their talks concluded on November 15 with a joint statement from the White House. The sense of the statement was that the three nations possessing the knowledge necessary to generate atomic energy had decided that the most effective means of controlling atomic power so that it might not be used destructively was through the United Nations Organization. They recommended that a Commission be established on Atomic Energy that would submit recommendations to the United Nations on means to ban military use and facilitate the exchange of scientific information on peaceful uses of atomic power.[139]

On the following day, Truman asked his cabinet for

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[138]Item No. 156, Special Message to the Congress on Atomic Energy, October 3, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 362-66. See also, Acheson, Present at the Creation, 124-25; Truman, Memoirs, I, 530-33; Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 463.

[139]Text of statement is in Truman, Memoirs, I, 542-44.

their comments on the agreement. Secretary Wallace expressed some reservations about the effectiveness of a commission. However, "All agreed," as Truman recalls, ". . . that to refer the problem of atomic energy to the United Nations would give that organization a chance to prove itself."[140] What many of those present at this meeting, including Truman, had apparently forgotten, was that they had agreed to exactly the opposite approach less than two months earlier. Stimson had emphasized in his memorandum "beyond all other considerations" that the United States must approach Russia on the controls question singly and directly, not through the United Nations, since such action would not be taken seriously by the Soviet Government.[141] On January 24, 1946, the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission was created.

The President charged the State Department with responsibility for drafting a plan for international control of atomic energy. Secretary Byrnes delegated the task to a committee chaired by Under Secretary of State Dean Acheson, which, assisted by a Board of Consultants led by David Lilienthal, submitted a proposal to Byrnes and Truman on March 16, 1946. This working-paper, since

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[140] Ibid., I, 544.

[141] Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 645; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 125.

known as the Acheson-Lilienthal Report, had, as the heart of its recommendations, a proposal that an international authority be created with a monopoly over all destructive uses of atomic energy.[142] On Byrnes' recommendation, Truman appointed Bernard M. Baruch as American representative on the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission.[143] Following some controversy with Acheson and Truman, Baruch received the latter's permission to revise the original recommendations. The President approved these changes and gave the revision to Baruch as his official policy directive on June 7.[144]

The American proposal for international control was submitted to the Commission by Baruch on June 14, 1946.[145]

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[142]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 152-54. See also, Walter LaFeber, America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-1966 (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1967), 34. Hereinafter cited as LaFeber, America, Russia and the Cold War.

[143]Baruch, then seventy-six years old, was a multimillionaire and self-styled "adviser to Presidents." The Senate confirmed his nomination on April 5, 1946.

[144]Bernard M. Baruch, The Public Years (Vol. II of My Own Story, 2 vols., New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960), 360-63. Hereinafter cited as Baruch, Public Years. For Acheson's version of his dispute with Baruch, see Present at the Creation, 154-56. For Truman's account, see his Memoirs, II, 7-10. See also, Byrnes, Speaking Frankly, 270; Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 554-58; LaFeber, America, Russia, and the Cold War, 34-35.

[145]Text of this document can be found in U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, A Decade of Foreign Policy: Basic Documents, 1941-1949, 81st Cong., 2nd Sess., 1950, 1079-87. Hereinafter cited as A Decade of Foreign Policy. Abridged text of this document can be found in Baruch, Public Years, 369-72.

The chief points of the plan are fully summarized in the following newspaper account:

> As soon as a satisfactory international agency can be set up; as soon as other powers have joined with us to guarantee that agency and give it the scope and authority it needs; as soon as we are assured that no other nation will or can use atomic bombs against us, the United States will cease the manufacture of atomic weapons, will destroy the bombs now in its possession, will give to the new agency, by stages as required, all pertinent information, and finally will turn over to this agency control of its own uranium and thorium deposits, its own primary production plants and the output of these plants.[146]

The plan, while sincere in its intent, contained three provisions that proved unacceptable to the Soviet Union: Surrender of the veto power on all matters respecting control of atomic energy; a thorough system of inspection and control; and, by implication, a partial subjugation of national sovereignty to an international body.[147] The Soviet counter-proposal was submitted five days later. It agreed on banning the production and use of atomic weapons, but called upon the United States first to cease bomb production and destroy existing weapons before any discussion of inspection and controls.[148] Truman found the Soviet proposals equally unacceptable.

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[146] *New York Times*, June 15, 1946.

[147] Bernardo and Bacon, *American Military Policy*, 465.

[148] LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War*, 35; Editor's Note, Koenig (ed.), *Truman Administration*, 336.

He told Baruch, "It is my opinion that we should stand pat on our program."[149]

During the years which followed, both the United States and the Soviet Union "stood pat" on their basic proposals, making only minor concessions to the other's views. The welter of proposals, counter-proposals, and rephrasings of essentially the same posture continued for years.[150] Truman's belief that there must be effective international inspection and control as a first step remained unchanged. He emphasized this in a campaign speech in October of 1948, at Milwaukee. After restating his position on controls, Truman went on to tell his audience that the United States was willing to sacrifice some of its national sovereignty and destroy its bombs as originally proposed in the Baruch Plan. "There has been no change in the American position," Truman said. "But the Soviet Union rejected such a plan as an intrusion upon its national sovereignty."[151] And there the matter

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[149]Truman to Baruch, July 10, 1946, quoted in Baruch, Public Years, 374.

[150]An illustration of this can be seen in two separate newspaper headlines in March, 1947: "U.S. Stand on Atom in U.N. Unchanged," New York Times, March 7, 1947; "U.S. Proposes Plan to Break Atom Deadlock," New York Herald-Tribune, March 28, 1947. The commission (AEC) adjourned sine die in May, 1948, resumed hearings in February of 1949 and gave up again in July. Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 466.

[151]Item No. 239, Address in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, October 14, 1948, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1948, 789.

of international control has since stood, made more complex and urgent by Soviet acquisition of atomic weapons in 1949.[152]

One by-product of the early stages of weapons control discussion was that it precipitated a conflict within the Administration, centering around the policy views of the Secretary of Commerce, Henry Wallace. On July 23, 1946, Wallace had written a twelve-page single-spaced letter to Truman in which he condemned the military build-up, atomic policy and the Administration's attitude toward international control. Truman thanked Wallace for the letter and promptly forgot it. On September 12 Wallace spoke in New York, delivering "an all-out attack" on American foreign policy, according to Truman, who publicly disavowed the Secretary's statements. Five days later, convinced, evidently, that he would rather be right than Secretary of Commerce, Wallace gave a copy of his letter of July 23 to the newspapers.[153]

The Wallace letter generated a great deal of comment in the American and international press. The

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[152]At this writing, almost a quarter-century later, no significant progress has been made, although strategic arms limitation talks (SALT) are presently in progress.

[153]Wallace to Truman, July 23, 1946, and reply, August 8, 1946, Clifford Papers, Subject File, Unification (Pt. 3), Truman Library.

State Department received numerous queries from ambassadors asking if the ex-Vice President's statements represented a change of policy. Secretary of State Byrnes wired from a Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in Paris that Wallace's comments were making his position difficult.[154] Truman's first reaction was to order the Secretaries of War and Navy to write him a letter, which was immediately released by the White House, repudiating Wallace's contentions about military policy. In the letter, the Secretaries denied that anyone in their departments was advocating a preventive war against the Soviet Union before they acquired the atomic bomb, as Wallace had charged.[155] Baruch also joined the group besieging Wallace with a lengthy memorandum to the President containing a detailed refutation of Wallace's statements respecting the American position on atomic energy controls.[156] Truman was left with no choice. As he wrote to his mother on September 20: "Well I had to fire Henry

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[154]Truman, Memoirs, I, 559.

[155]Patterson and Forrestal to Truman, September 18, 1946, RG107, OSA, RPP/White House, National Archives.

[156]Baruch to Truman, September 24, 1946, Clifford Papers, Atomic Energy folder, Truman Library.

today, and of course I hated to do it."[157]

In Truman's message to the Congress of October 3, 1945, cited earlier, by which he called for international control of atomic energy, the President also told the Congress that there was need for legislation providing for domestic control. He asked the Congress to establish an Atomic Energy Commission, its members appointed by the President, with authority to regulate all activities related to atomic energy.[158]

The President's message did not detail the structure and operational policy of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) but merely suggested its functions in broad terms. However, shortly after the message was sent up, the leadership of both House and Senate acquired twenty-one page drafts detailing the proposed legislation. Unable to determine the origin of these draft recommendations, the New York Times ascribed them to "other sources."[159] The

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[157]Truman to Martha Truman, September 20, 1946, quoted in Truman, Memoirs, I, 560. The original draft of Truman's public statement of September 20, 1946, firing Wallace is in Clifford Papers, Subject File, "Wallace, Henry," Truman Library. Wallace's account of these events is quoted in Williams (ed.) Shaping of American Diplomacy, 997-99. See also, Phillips, Truman Presidency, 148-54.

[158]Item No. 156, Special Message to the Congress on Atomic Energy, October 3, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 364. See also, Truman, Memoirs, I, 531.

[159]Quoted in Editor's Note, Koenig (ed.), Truman Administration, 126.

source was undoubtedly the Secretary of War. A letter in Patterson's files, addressed to the Speaker of the House, dated the same day as Truman's message, reads in part:

> There is inclosed herewith a draft of a bill "For the development and control of atomic energy." This bill is offered pursuant to the President's message to Congress today and is consistent with this message and with the policies announced by the President therein. The bill was prepared by the Interim Committee appointed by the Secretary of War with the approval of the President. . . .[160]

The following day, October 4, the May-Johnson bill was introduced. It received strong backing from the Pentagon, with Secretary Patterson continually referring to the proposed legislation as "representing the views of the Administration as well as of the War Department."[161] While Truman knew that Patterson was submitting draft

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[160]Patterson to the Speaker of the House of Representatives (Sam Rayburn), October 3, 1945, RG107, OSW, 471.6--Atomic Bomb, National Archives. A copy of the draft is not in the files, but it is outlined in the body of the letter. An earlier letter to Truman's counsel, Judge Rosenman, from the War Department reads: "An interim committee has completed the recommendations for (atomic bomb) legislation which are now in Mr. Byrnes' hands together with War Department comments." Col. H. M. Pasco to Rosenman, September 1, 1945, Rosenman Papers, Subject File, 1945, Truman Library. A memorandum to the President from the Secretary of War notes that the Under Secretary of War "worked with the House Military Affairs Committee" on the May-Johnson Bill. Patterson to Truman, December 27, 1945, RG107, OSW, 471.6--Atomic Bomb, National Archives.

[161]Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 438. Asked about the May-Johnson Bill at a press conference on October 18, 1945, Truman said it seemed "satisfactory," but added, "I don't know, because I haven't studied it carefully." Item No. 172, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 403.

legislation, it is doubtful that he was aware of the specific nature of these proposals until they emerged as the May-Johnson bill. He later described the bill as having a military approach: "Its aim was to set up a kind of permanent 'Manhattan District' under military control."[162] The President explained that his message to Congress emphasized the peaceful use of the power of the atom and that he was opposed to military control.[163] With the War Department earnestly urging adoption of a bill to which Truman became increasingly opposed, a struggle evolved between the Commander in Chief and the nation's military leadership over control of the most powerful instrument of destruction ever known.

During October and November, Truman had become aware of the deficiencies in the proposed AEC legislation through memoranda received from several individuals in the Administration and criticism from outside the government, notably from nuclear scientists.[164] He was also aware of the military endorsement of May-Johnson, as he commented in his Memoirs: "The military services felt very strongly

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[162] Truman, Memoirs, II, 2.

[163] Ibid.

[164] Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 436-39. See also, Diary Entries, October 5, 30, 1945, Smith Papers, Diary, copy in Truman Library of original in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.

that the control of atomic development should be under their auspices, if not under their immediate jurisdiction, and they were making strong representations to that effect to the Congress."[165]

The President wrote a memorandum to the Secretaries of War and Navy late in November to indicate his dissatisfaction with their bill. Truman told his military chiefs that he had received numerous objections to the bill and so had re-examined it in detail. He found the bill had several "undesirable features" and felt it would require extensive amendment.[166] Truman then listed ten specific amendments to the bill which he considered essential. Among the ten were several having direct bearing on Presidential authority over atomic energy policy. Truman also told the Secretaries that the specific provision of the bill allowing members of the Commission or its administrator to be military officers would have to be eliminated before the bill would be acceptable to him. Truman concluded by asking that the Interim Committee be reconvened for their views on these "necessary amendments" and that the May-Johnson Bill be recommitted in the House

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[165]Truman, Memoirs, II, 3.

[166]Truman to Secretary of War (Patterson) and Secretary of the Navy (Forrestal), November 28, 1945, RG107, OSW, 471.6--Atomic Bomb, National Archives.

for the purpose of making these amendments.[167]

The War Department did not reply to Truman's memorandum until late in December. In the meantime, the military continued to press for Congressional approval of the May-Johnson Bill. The President decided to air the controversy in a White House meeting he called for December 4. Among those present at this meeting were Forrestal, Patterson and Groves, all of whom were publicly on record as demanding military control of atomic energy, and Senator Brien McMahon of Connecticut.[168] Following his usual practice on controversial questions, Truman asked each man present to state his views. Then Truman gave his opinion, which was that ". . . the entire program and operation should be under civilian control. . . ."[169]

Senator McMahon, taking his cue from Truman's remarks, introduced legislation in the Senate December 20,

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[167]Ibid. Truman dates this memorandum "November 30" in his autobiography. But the copy in the Secretary of War's files bears the date of November 28. Memoirs, II, 3.

[168]Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 270; Rogow, Victim of Duty, 148; Truman, Memoirs, II, 2-3. McMahon was chairman of the Senate Special Committee on Atomic Energy. He had agreed to seek the amendments Truman desired in the May-Johnson Bill. Apparently recognizing that the military lobby was at cross-purposes to the President, he had suggested this meeting. In addition to Forrestal, Patterson, and Groves, Admiral Leahy, Truman's chief military adviser also objected to the lack of military authority proposed in the McMahon Bill. Diary Entry, February 13, 1946, in Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 133.

[169]Truman, Memoirs, II, 3.

incorporating the President's concepts of total civilian control. A week later, the Secretary of War sent a long memorandum to Truman that replied to his ten-point critique, while ignoring the McMahon Bill. In this memo, Patterson rejected six of the ten Presidential proposals. His strongest objections were, of course, to Truman's insistance that no member of the military could serve on the Atomic Energy Commission. "It is felt," Patterson argued, "that in time of war or national emergency the interest of the Armed Forces in the control and use of atomic energy might be paramount. . . ."[170] The Secretary further argued that preventing military men from holding positions pivotal to determining the development, storage and use of atomic weapons was ". . . contrary to the philosophy of unified military direction."[171] Patterson closed by telling Truman that it would be difficult to get May-Johnson recommitted and that it might be better to try to amend the bill on the floor of the House or in the Senate.[172]

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[170]Patterson to Truman, December 27, 1945, RG107, OSW, 471.6--Atomic Bomb, National Archives. A note of transmittal attached to the memorandum indicates that it was written by Under Secretary of War Kenneth Royall, with the advice of Secretary Patterson, General Groves and some members of the Interim Committee. See Royall to Patterson, December 28, 1945, ibid.

[171]Ibid.

[172]Ibid.

Truman terminated further Pentagon opposition to civilian control of atomic weaponry on January 23, his language leaving no doubt that he considered the matter settled:

> After careful consideration, it is my judgment that the recommendations contained in my memorandum of November 30th should be adhered to without modification.
>
> . . . I deem adherence to all the recommendations in that memorandum to be essential.
>
> The Chairman of the Military Affairs Committee of the House and the leaders in the House should be advised that the Administration desires recommitment of the May-Johnson bill for purposes of amendment or, failing this, that no steps be taken to alter the present status of the bill in the House.
>
> It is my wish, furthermore, that in appearing before Congressional committees or in discussions with Members of Congress relative to atomic energy legislation officials of the Administration present views not inconsistent with the points given in my memorandum of November 30th and reaffirmed herein.[173]

While the memorandum did end military advocacy of the May-Johnson Bill, the concept of military control of the atom had strong congressional support, as Senator McMahon reported to the President. To help encourage support for McMahon's bill, Truman wrote the Senator a

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[173]Truman to Secretaries of War and Navy, January 23, 1946, quoted in Truman, Memoirs, 3-4. See also, Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 489. (As noted earlier, Truman dates the prior memorandum "November 30," whereas the Secretary of War's copy was dated November 28.) The importance of the last paragraph of this January 23 memorandum can be seen in that on the date it was written, Navy Secretary Forrestal testified to the Senate Special Committee on Atomic Energy in opposition to the Truman proposal for a five-member AEC serving "at the pleasure of the President." Rogow, Victim of Duty, 150.

long letter of endorsement which was released to the press, February 1, 1946.[174] With open White House support the McMahon Bill began attracting more backers, but lost one final skirmish to the supporters of military control.

In March 1946 Senator Arthur Vandenberg introduced an amendment to the McMahon Bill, calling for the establishment of a Military Liaison Committee to the Atomic Energy Commission, the committee to be made up of representatives of the War and Navy departments. The committee proposed by Vandenberg would be empowered to advise and consult with the AEC on all military applications of atomic energy. The Military Liaison Committee would also be able to appeal any action or proposal of the AEC directly to the Secretaries of War and Navy, and if either agreed, the matter would be referred to the President for a final decision. Vandenberg, who endorsed a civilian AEC, said that the resolution was his alone, that he had not consulted with the military at all.[175]

In his Memoirs, Truman attacked the Vandenberg Amendment as being destructive of the civil supremacy principle; he described it as representing a military veto

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[174]Truman, Memoirs, II, 4-5. See also, Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, 490-91.

[175]Diary Entry, March 14, 1946, in Vandenberg, Private Papers, 256-57. Rogow asserts that Forrestal was behind Vandenberg's amendment. See Victim of Duty, 152.

of Atomic Energy Commission actions.[176] Asked about the proposal at a press conference following its introduction, Truman invoked his role as Commander in Chief to argue against the amendment:

> I don't think there is a clear understanding . . . on what is meant by civilian control of that board. . . . The idea is that the military, of course, has an important part to play and should be consulted, but it is a mistake to believe that only the military can guard the national security. . . . Now the President is the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States, and the civilian board under him would in no way hamper the military in their proper function.[177]

The McMahon Bill, after considerable give-and-take in the Congress, became law as the Atomic Energy Act on August 1, 1946. The result was a compromise; civilian control predominated through the five-member Atomic Energy Commission. But the Vandenberg Amendment remained in the final version without substantive changes, meaning that the Military Liaison Committee remained in a strong advisory position. The act also established a Division of Military Application within the commission, stipulating

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[176] Truman, Memoirs, II, 7.

[177] Item No. 61, President's Press Conference, March 14, 1946. Public Papers . . . Truman, 1946, 157; Truman, Memoirs, II, 6-7.

that its director must be a military officer.[178]

Despite Truman's hyperbole and the concessions finally made to military influence on the Atomic Energy Commission, Truman had prevailed. For what was permamently established in the course of this struggle was the principle that the authority over the most destructive weapon of war still rested with civilians, acting under a mandate from another civilian, the Commander in Chief.[179] The Atomic Energy Act not only excluded the Armed Services from exercising direct control over nuclear weaponry, it also strengthened the President's military powers at the expense of the Congress. As Dorothy James wrote in her

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[178](S.1717) Public Law 585, 79th Cong., 2nd Sess. See also, Brief of S.1717, Clifford Papers, Subject File, Atomic Energy folder, Truman Library. For text of the original draft of the McMahon Bill, see Hewlett and Anderson, The New World, Appendix 1, 714-22. See also, Rogow, Victim of Duty, 152-53; Truman, Memoirs, II, 15, 294-95.

[179]While Truman had clearly established the principle of civilian control of nuclear weaponry, he did not provide a clear-cut policy as to whether the bomb would ever be used and under what conditions such use would be authorized. This will present an obvious difficulty to military policy planners. One writer has said: "The services, it must be remembered, did not even have physical possession of the weapon that bulked so large in their disputes. It was in the hands of a civilian agency subject to the authority of the President, but not the military, and the only clear national policy was that, under proper conditions, it would be given up." Warner R. Schilling, "The Politics of National Defense: Fiscal 1950," in Schilling, Paul Y. Hammond and Glenn H. Synder, Strategy, Politics, and Defense Budgets (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1962), 173. Hereinafter cited as Schilling, "Politics of National Defense."

study of the modern presidency concerning the Atomic Energy Act; "(it) . . . gives a dimension to the President's function as Commander-in-Chief that it never had in peacetime, providing a further means for erosion of Congressional power in matters of defense."[180]

The War Department did not give up its efforts to secure direct authority over the bomb, the intermittent struggles continued through the remainder of Truman's administration. He had, in fact, anticipated this. The President told the members of the Commission just prior to their taking control that, "The Army will never give up without a fight, and they will fight you on this from here on out, and be working at it in all sorts of places. But you can count on it, I am your advocate."[181]

The Atomic Energy Act provided that the new Commission would take complete control of all facets of atomic energy on January 1, 1947. Until that time, responsibility for maintaining atomic secrecy for research and development and for the first postwar testing of nuclear weapons rested with the War Department.[182]

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[180]James, Contemporary Presidency, 89.

[181]Journal Entry, December 11, 1946, Lilienthal, Atomic Energy Years, 118.

[182]Clarification of those functions relative to security and exercise of other atomic project powers was discussed in messages from Secretary of War Patterson to the President: Patterson to Truman, February 27, 1946,

In a news conference just after the Japanese surrender, a reporter asked the President what was to be done with the Manhattan Project facilities since the war was over. Truman replied that, Congress willing, the project would continue with experiments in the peaceful use of the atom.[183] At another meeting with the press two months later, a reporter asked the President if the United States was still manufacturing atomic bombs. Truman replied affirmatively. When asked why, he said they were for "experimental purposes."[184] The Joint Chiefs of Staff had requested, and Truman had granted, authority to test atomic bombs. The Joint Chiefs told the President that they needed the tests to determine the effect of a bomb against naval vessels and to determine ". . . the consequence of this powerful aerial weapon with respect to the size, composition and employment of the armed

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RG407, The Adjutant General-(WDCSA), 471.6--Atomic, National Archives; Patterson to the President, September 23, 1946, Clifford Papers, Subject File, Atomic Energy folder, Truman Library.

[183]Item No. 106, Press Conference, August 16, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 224.

[184]Item No. 193, Press Conference, November 20, 1945, ibid., 495. Truman's statement apparently generated a good deal of speculation in the press, for on December 7, Patterson asked the President for permission to issue a joint public statement with Forrestal to the effect that tests were to be conducted. Patterson to Truman, December 7, 1945, RG107, OSW, 471.6--Atomic Bomb (031.1), National Archives.

forces. . . ."[185] In authorizing the first of these tests, Truman launched a program of research, development, testing and stockpiling of increasingly-powerful weapons which has since continued.[186]

The first of the Pacific bomb tests was performed upon a fleet of seventy-three surplus ships off Bikini Atoll on July 1, 1946. The bomb, dropped from a B-29, sank only five ships and damaged fifty-four others. A second test, detonated underwater, proved more successful, sinking twelve ships. However, the bomb created a severe problem with radioactivity: "Five days after the bomb exploded," according to one official report, "vessels near the center of the target area were so hot with continuing

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[185]The JCS request to the President is cited in a memorandum informing Truman of progress made subsequent to his approval of the tests. Kenneth G. Royall (Acting Secretary of War) and Forrestal to the President, January 7, 1946, RG107, OSW, 471.6, National Archives. See also, Royall to Forrestal, January 7, 1946, ibid.

[186]Truman's decision to begin the project was probably influenced by intelligence estimates which held that the Soviet Union had begun a crash program to produce their own atomic weapons. He may also have been swayed by the Soviet refusal to accept the American proposals for banning atomic weapons. Acheson, Present at the Creation, 125, 155. Representative of the military viewpoint being conveyed to Truman at the time is a statement by General Thomas F. Farrell, Deputy Director of the Manhattan Project, who said: "There is no conceivable defense at present against the atomic bomb, except to have more than your enemy or to stop him from using them against you by hitting him first." New York Times, September 21, 1945.

radioactivity that even damage control parties were not permitted to board them."[187] In May 1948 the White House announced that a second series of nuclear tests had been performed on Eniwetok Atoll in mid-April. Three different devices of an improved design had been tested with results, according to one press source, ". . . that transcended all other developments in nuclear energy since the dawn of the atomic age."[188]

Another development of the atomic age followed in the next year. In February 1949 Truman met with Lilienthal on Atomic Energy Commission matters. Lilienthal projected for the President U.S. nuclear weapons capacity as of January 1, 1951. Whatever the figure was, Truman's eyes widened and he said, "Boy, we could blow a hole clean through the earth!"[189] The discussion continued in a more serious vein about the terrible power of the bomb, and the President assured Lilienthal that he would never

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[187]William W. Carpenter (Chief, Office of Legislative Services) to W. Stuart Symington (Asst. Secretary of War for Air), August 2, 1946, RG340, Secretary of the Air Force, Office of Administrative Assistant, General Files, Special Interest File 4A, National Archives.

[188]New York Times, May 18, 1948. See also, Truman to Forrestal, May 17, 1948, RG407, AG201.22, National Archives; New York Herald-Tribune, May 18, 1948; Journal Entry, May 17, 1948, Lilienthal, Atomic Energy Years, 340-41.

[189]Journal Entry, February 14, 1949, Lilienthal, Atomic Energy Years, 473.

order use of the bomb again if he could avoid it; "But I know the Russians would use it on us if they had it."[190] Less than seven months later, on September 3, 1949, an Air Force B-29 collected a radioactive air sample over the North Pacific. Truman's intelligence advisers, who had been estimating a Soviet nuclear test no earlier than 1952, now had to inform the President that an atomic device had been exploded on the Asiatic mainland in the last week of August.[191]

The most significant result of the Russian atomic test news was to accelerate hydrogen bomb research in the United States, and to give a sense of urgency to the decision on whether or not to proceed with a crash program to speed development of the thermonuclear "super-bomb." The question of beginning an intensive effort to produce a hydrogen bomb was submitted to the General Advisory Committee, the major scientific advisory body of the Atomic Energy Commission. The committee reported back to the AEC on October 30, indicating unanimous opposition from a scientific standpoint, but acknowledging that the question

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[190] Ibid., 473-74.

[191] Truman, Memoirs, II, 306-307. See also, Lamont, Day of Trinity, 280. Truman used the occasion of publicly announcing the Soviet bomb test to call again for a ". . . trully effective enforceable international control of atomic energy." Item No. 216, Statement by the President, September 23, 1949, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1949, 485.

involved decisions on foreign and defense policy not within their purview. The Atomic Energy Commission reported to the President on November 9 in substantially the same vein; the question of a crash program could not be decided ". . . without reference to political and military as well as technical considerations."[192]

To resolve the question, on November 10, Truman turned it over to a Special Committee composed of the Secretaries of State and Defense and the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission.[193] On January 31, 1950, the Special Committee submitted the following recommendations to President Truman:

> (a) That the President direct the Atomic Energy Commission to proceed to determine the technical feasibility of a thermonuclear weapon, the scale and rate of effort to be determined jointly by the Atomic Energy Commission and the Department of Defense; and that the necessary ordnance developments and carrier

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[192]Warner R. Schilling, "The H-Bomb Decision: How to Decide Without Actually Choosing," Political Science Quarterly, LXXVI, No. 1 (March, 1961), 29. Hereinafter cited as Schilling, "H-Bomb Decision." This article is an excellent, detailed analysis of the decision-making process. For other effects of the Soviet atomic test on American politico-military thinking, see Millis, Arms and Men, 291; Robert Endicott Osgood, Limited War: The Challenge to American Strategy (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 157-59. Hereinafter cited as Osgood, Limited War. See also, Paul Y. Hammond, "NSC-68: Prologue to Rearmament," in Warner Schilling, Hammond, and Glenn H. Synder, Strategy, Politics, and Defense Budgets (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1962), 285-86. Hereinafter cited as Hammond, "NSC-68."

[193]Dean Acheson, Louis Johnson and David Lilienthal, respectively.

program be undertaken concurrently;

(b) That the President defer decision pending the reexamination referred to in (c) as to whether thermonuclear weapons should be produced beyond the number required for a test of feasibility;

(c) That the President direct the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense to undertake a reexamination of our objectives in peace and war and of the effect of these objectives on our strategic plans, in the light of the probable fission bomb capability and possible thermonuclear bomb capability of the Soviet Union.

(d) That the President indicate publicly the intention of this Government to continue work to determine the feasibility of a thermonuclear weapon, and that no further official information on it be made public without the approval of the President.[194]

When Truman was handed these proposals of the Special Committee, Lilienthal began a statement in which he hoped to indicate to the President that he had serious reservations about the recommendations made. However,

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[194]Lilienthal, Atomic Energy Years, 624. Lilienthal, who was against the crash program, offered a compelling argument for his position, but ended up signing the recommendation to Truman for want of an alternative. Ibid., 627-32. In March, 1969, Lilienthal said he had to fight the H-Bomb proposals in secret meetings because of security regulations. He felt the decision should have been openly and publicly debated, as the Nixon Administration's proposal for an anti-ballistic missle system was then being publicly aired, ". . . because it involved the fate of practically every human being." Monroe Morning World, March 17, 1969. Recommendation (d) was necessitated by Senator Edwin C. Johnson (Democrat, Colo.), who revealed on a television program that the United States was developing a "super bomb" with one thousand times the destructive power of the Nagasaki bomb. This disclosure caused a great deal of public speculation. Schwarz, American Strategy, 76; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 345-46. The Secretary of Defense objected to recommendation (b), and with the backing of the Joint Chiefs, was able to get Truman to direct the AEC to plan full hydrogen bomb production. Truman, Memoirs, II, 311.

Truman cut the AEC chairman off, saying that with all the talk in Congress and the press about a "super-bomb, he had no alternative but to approve the crash program. There was, the President said, no time left for quiet re-examination of the proposals. At home that evening, Lilienthal confided in his journal that it was his impression that Truman was ". . . clearly set on what he was going to do before we set foot inside the door."[195] The whole meeting lasted about seven minutes. Later in the day, the White House released a Presidential statement to the press:

> It is part of my responsibility as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces to see to it that our country is able to defend itself against any possible aggressor. Accordingly, I have directed the Atomic Energy Commission to continue its work on all forms of atomic weapons, including the so-called hydrogen or superbomb.[196]

The first hydrogen bomb was successfully tested on November 1, 1952, just days before the election to determine Truman's successor.

As the first Commander in Chief to bear responsibility for nuclear weapons policy, Truman established

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[195]Lilienthal, Atomic Energy Years, 632-33. See also Acheson, Present at the Creation, 348-49; Schilling, "H-Bomb Decision," 36ff.

[196]Item No. 26, Statement by the President on the Hydrogen Bomb, January 31, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 138. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 309-10.

precedents and policies whose eventual consequences cannot yet be estimated. As chief of the military, he directed them to employ atomic bombs against strategic, non-military targets; in form, if not quite in fact, he took away from the military the control of the production and use of these weapons; he made sincere, if uncompromising attempts at achieving an international ban on nuclear weaponry; and, failing in this, spent the remainder of his administration stockpiling ever more strategic bombs and super-bombs and developing an arsenal of new tactical weapons employing nuclear warheads.

John Hersey once asked the President what books a man should read to prepare himself for life in the Atomic Age. Truman replied, "Nothing but the lives of great men!"[197] The end result of Truman's nuclear policies may well determine whether future generations spend their hours reading of his greatness or learning to fashion crude implements out of stone.

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[197]Hersey, "Profiles," Pt. 1, 49.

# CHAPTER V

## THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF AS REFORMER

> You know, what we are trying to do--what I am trying to do is set up an organization on the experience that we have had in the greatest war in history, so that organization will be ready to operate in case of an emergency--which we hope will never come. . . .[1]

In his struggle to create the Atomic Energy Commission under complete civilian control, President Truman had to contend with opposition from the War Department and a large bloc in the Congress. His limited success in establishing AEC was but one of several of Truman's proposed reforms within the military and in the civil-military relationship. Briefly stated, the reforms attempted during Truman's tenure were: (1) The establishment of a universal military training system, which failed, leading to permanent peacetime conscription; (2) A massive restructuring of military organizational and command relationships to bring about unification of the Armed Forces; (3) An end to racial segregation in the military services. As with civilian control of the AEC,

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[1]Item No. 86, President's Special Conference With the American Society of Newspaper Editors, April 18, 1946, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1946, 207.

these reform efforts were not clear-cut victories for the Administration, nor did they bring about the best of all possible military organizations. However, it can be reasonably argued that Truman's reforms left the services more efficient, less biased and more powerful than in all their prior history.

Preceding the Second World War there were two basic concepts for peacetime military organization: a large standing army, commanded by an elite class of professional soldiers, its ranks stocked by ordinary citizens conscripted for varying lengths of service; and secondly, a minimal peacetime force of professional volunteers (in all ranks) which depended upon the creation of massive armies of citizen soldiers to meet any military emergency. Non-totalitarian governments, such as the United States, depended upon the latter form of organization.

Toward the end of World War II, military planners, anticipating the postwar period, envisioned a concept of the "citizen army" that would require far less mobilization and training in the event of war. These planners were, of course, anticipating a total war similar to the one the nation was then engaged in fighting. They neither could, nor did, anticipate an American policy of containment of Communist expansionism which necessitated fighting limited wars by conventional means with small armies. The governing assumption in postwar planning was that Congress

would enact legislation requiring that every young, able-bodied citizen receive military training and be made a member of a ready reserve following such training. The War Department rationale behind this proposal for a massive peacetime reserve force was that it was ". . . merely a proposal for perfecting a traditional national institution to meet modern requirements which no longer permit extemporization after the outbreak of war."[2] This concept is commonly called universal military training.

When a "citizen soldier" entered the White House--in the person of Captain Harry, formerly of the 2nd Missouri Field Artillery--the advocates of universal military training had acquired a powerful ally. Truman's pride in his own service in World War I and in that of his fellow Guardsmen rings clearly throughout the volumes of his Memoirs. In the first volume of that work Truman said that ever since the First World War he believed the only recourse to America's distaste for a large standing

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[2]U.S., War Department, "General Principles of National Military Policy to Govern Preparation of Post-War Plans: Extracts from Directives by General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff," Circular No. 347 (August 25, 1944); O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 32. For an interesting historical background on UMT, see Millis, Arms and Men, 274-76.

army was a trained soldier-citizenry.[3] During his years in the Senate Truman recalls supporting, in vain, a bill to make permanent the Civilian Conservation Corps. He hoped that the CCC could eventually be converted into a universal training program.[4] Truman's first Chief of Staff of the Army was General George C. Marshall, the leading military advocate of UMT and a man for whom the President had a very deep respect. Given these factors, it was natural for Truman to publicly back such a training program from the very outset of his Presidency.[5]

Truman's first public statement on universal training occurred in a press conference on June 1, 1945. The President told reporters that he had already conferred with members of the House and Senate, and that he did not want to comment further on the subject. However, he did add: "And I have got a few views on universal military training of my own, which don't agree with the

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[3]Truman, Memoirs, I, 510. Asked in 1947 if he still advocated universal military training, Truman replied: "Yes, indeed. I have always been for it ever since 1905, and that's a long time. I demonstrated that I was for it because I immediately went into (National Guard) training when I was 21 years old." Item No. 36, Press Conference, February 20, 1947, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1947, 147.

[4]Truman, Memoirs, I, 153.

[5]Ibid., 510. See also, Russell F. Weigley, Towards an American Army: Military Thought from Washington to Marshall (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1962), 247. Hereinafter cited as Weigley, Towards an American Army.

Army, and don't agree with the Navy, and don't agree with the House or Senate. . . ."[6]

On June 4 the House Postwar Military Policy Committee began hearings on universal military training legislation. The military leadership was convinced that their best hope for a satisfactory compulsory training bill was to obtain passage prior to the end of the war. They were fearful that postwar apathy would set in quickly so they presented to the committee ". . . a glittering array of military witnesses in favor of the proposal."[7] The array which testified included Secretary of War Stimson, Navy Secretary Forrestal, Admiral Ernest

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[6]Item No. 44, Press Conference, June 1, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 78. See also, Washington Post, June 2, 1945. One major difference between Truman and the services was over the timing of the training period. The President, in an unused plan developed in June, 1945, hoped to split the year of active service into several periods over a four year span, to be followed by three years of inactive reserve service. The Army and Navy, on the other hand, wanted the trainee for one unbroken year of active service. Draft, "Plan for Universal Military Training under Postwar Conditions," June 23, 1945, Rosenman Papers, Subject File, 1945, Universal Military Training, Truman Library. See also, "The War and Navy Department Views on Universal Military Training," (undated, 38 pg. printed pamphlet; cover bears handwritten notation: "publd. about 10 May 1945"), copy in ibid.

[7]Washington Post, June 11, 1945. No signs of public apathy can be found in the Gallup polls taken on the question in May and July. They recorded about seventy percent in favor of UMT. See ibid., May 8, July 18, 1945.

J. King and General Marshall.[8] General Eisenhower and Admirals Nimitz and Halsey, all of whom were unable to attend the hearings, sent statements endorsing universal military training.[9] The gist of their statements, taken collectively, was that the concept of a large standing army was repugnant to American tradition and prevailing public opinion, in addition to being very expensive. Universal military training, they argued, was much less expensive, would provide the nation with a deterrent to possible aggressors, provide peace through strength and, besides, would be "good for the boys." In their report of the hearings to the House, the Postwar Military Policy Committee recommended immediate legislative action on such a program of universal military training.[10]

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[8]New York Times, June 16, 1945; New York Herald-Tribune, June 16, 1945; Baltimore Sun, June 16, 1945. See also, Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, 596-99. The New York Times reported (October 28, 1945) that General Marshall, ". . . has made a virtual crusade for UMT."

[9]Baltimore Sun, June 16, 1945. Eisenhower's statement was contained in a letter to Clifton Woodrum, chairman of the committee. Text of the letter appears in the New York Times, June 16, 1945. A summary of the principal arguments against UMT can be found in a memorandum, George M. Elsey to James K. Vardaman, August 18, 1945, Rosenman Papers, Subject File, 1945, Universal Military Training, Truman Library.

[10]U.S., Congress, House, Universal Military Training, Report No. 857, 79 Cong., 1 Sess., July 5, 1945. Full text of report is also printed in New York Times, July 6, 1945. See also, Lauris Norstad to Commanding General, Continental Air Forces, August 8, 1945, RG18, Army Air Force (AAF), AF353-UMT, 1945, National Archives.

The Policy Committee report sparked increased comment--both for and against compulsory postwar training--in the news media during the next several months.[11] Truman kept his own views on UMT planning to himself. In mid-August he told a reporter: "I am going to make recommendations to Congress on a universal military program which is not peacetime conscription."[12] He refused to elaborate as to details and timing. The President presented a preliminary draft of his training plan to a Cabinet meeting on August 31, and found their overall response to be favorable. He told the Cabinet that this was the beginning of a "new military policy" that was required if the United States was to continue international leadership.[13]

One point in Truman's twenty-one point message to the Congress on September 6 called for legislation extending conscription into the postwar period. The President explained that this was only a stopgap measure for the immediate war-to-peace transitional period. Conversant with his statement to the cabinet a week earlier,

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[11]See, for example, Joseph Loftus, "Military Training Issue Quiescent But Not Dead," New York Times, July 22, 1945; (by "militaris"), "Conscription or Enlistment?," The Nation, CLXI, No. 2 (July 14, 1945), 32-34.

[12]Item No. 106, Press Conference, August 16, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 227. See also, Washington Post, August 17, 1945.

[13]Truman, Memoirs, I, 510.

Truman told the Congress that he would soon send them recommendations for ". . . a comprehensive and continuous program of national security, including a universal training program, unification of the armed forces, and the use and control of atomic energy."[14] The President had already put his chief speechwriters, Judge Rosenman and Clark Clifford, to work drafting an address on universal training. On October 9, Rosenman sent a memorandum to the President in which he urged him to accept the Army position on one continuous year of training, rather than breaking the training into four periods totaling one year, which Truman favored. Rosenman also urged the President to give the plan to Congress as soon as he approved it: "The longer we get away from the war . . . the smaller are the chances of favorable reception in the

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[14]Item No. 128, Special Message to the Congress Presenting a 21-Point Program for the Reconversion Period, September 6, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 127-28. In a letter to the Secretary of War, Truman restated the passage cited here and told the Secretary he wanted the War Department to, ". . . make the necessary studies, prepare material, assist in drafting, present testimony to Congress, and in general, follow the progress of the legislation in Congress." The Secretary was further instructed to send progress reports to the White House on the first and fifteenth of each month. Truman to Patterson, October 4, 1945, RG407, OSW, AG011 (4 Oct. '45), National Archives. According to Secretary of the Navy Forrestal, in a Cabinet meeting on August 17 the majority of the members told the President that there was little possibility that Congress would permit an extension of Selective Service. Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 89-90.

Congress."[15] Truman apparently accepted both suggestions.

The President presented his universal military training plan to a joint session of Congress on October 23, 1945. In it, he outlined what he considered to be the prime elements of a modern military structure:

> I recommend that we create a postwar military organization which will contain the following basic elements:
>
> First--A comparatively small regular Army, Navy and Marine Corps;
>
> Second--A greatly strengthened National Guard and Organized Reserve for the Army, Navy and Marine Corps;
>
> Third--A General Reserve composed of all the male citizens of the United States who have received training.
>
> The General Reserve would be available for rapid mobilization in time of emergency, but it would have no obligation to serve . . . unless and until called to the service by an Act of the Congress.
>
> In order to provide this General Reserve, I recommend to the Congress the adoption of a plan for Universal Military Training.[16]

In explaining the plan to Congress, Truman said that critics erred in calling this type of training conscription. He defined conscription as compulsory membership in a branch of the armed forces, whereas those involved in a UMT program would simply be civilians receiving training. The President emphasized this by

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[15]Rosenman to Truman, October 9, 1945, Rosenman Papers, Subject File, 1945, Universal Military Training, Truman Library.

[16]Item No. 174, Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on Universal Military Training, October 23, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 407. Text of speech is also in Koenig (ed.), Truman Administration, 222-30.

saying that the program would not replace Selective Service, which would continue in its function of furnishing replacements for the services.[17] This part of the President's argument seems strained, since the training would be compulsory and under the tutelage of the military.

The specifics of Truman's proposal called for one continuous year of training to be commenced at age eighteen or upon completion of high school, whichever was later. All the normal Selective Service exemptions and deferments, such as for dependents, occupations, illiteracy and medical disabilities, aside from the most grievous physical impairments, would be disallowed. The year of training would be followed by six years of General Reserve membership, then transfer to a secondary reserve status.[18]

The President acknowledged that the fundamental reason for universal training was to provide full military preparedness for any potential aggression against the United States. But he also believed that numerous "useful by-products" of great benefit to the individual could also be derived from his UMT proposal. The training would, he believed, lower the national illiteracy rate,

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[17]Item No. 174, Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on Universal Military Training, October 23, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 407-408.

[18]Ibid., 408-409.

improve the general physical condition and remove minor medical disabilities. Truman also assured Congress that the trainees would receive ample opportunity for self-perfection, instruction in useful civilian skills and proper care for their moral and spiritual well-being.[19]

There were several bills regarding UMT in the Congress at the time of Truman's speech, none of which quite matched the Administration proposal. Congress, which was generally unsympathetic to the idea, took no action on Universal Military Training in 1945.[20] Truman reminded the Congress of its inactivity--on what he now preferred to call "universal Training"--in his State of the Union Message released January 21, 1946.[21] In a conference with Budget Director Harold Smith on the material to be included in this message to Congress, the President had explained his preference for the phrase "universal

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[19]Ibid., 408. In his autobiography, Truman said he sent the UMT message up to Congress on the 22nd. See Memoirs, I, 510. However, the official edition of his public papers says he delivered his UMT speech personally to a Joint Session of Congress in the House chamber at 12:31 PM, October 23. See Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 413. See also, Sidney Shalett, New York Times, October 28, 1945. Truman's plan did have the backing of the Secretary of War and the Army Chief of Staff. See, Patterson to Truman, October 18, 1945, Rosenman Papers, Subject File, 1945, Universal Military Training, Truman Library.

[20]Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 448; Sidney Shalett, New York Times, October 28, 1945.

[21]Item No. 18, Message to the Congress on the State of the Union and on the Budget for 1947, January 21, 1946, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1946, 52.

training." He told Smith that he did not want a military program as such, but one which emphasized physical and educational improvement. Truman said he chose the Army to run the program simply because it alone had sufficient resources. He also believed that the program would democratize the Army and "overthrow the West Point and Annapolis cliques" of the services by "recruiting commissioned officers from the rank and file."[22] The Commander in Chief--who, as a young man, was rejected in his application to West Point, and who, entering as a "rank-and-filer," rose to a captaincy in World War I--may not have been entirely motivated by pure, democratic considerations.

The one UMT proposal receiving Congressional attention early in 1946 was H.R. 4774, a bill "To Provide for Military Training of Youths in Peacetime." But the Administration and the military would not support the bill because it varied sharply in its particulars from their proposals. Secretary of War Patterson made this clear to

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[22]Diary Entry, January 4, 1946, Smith Papers, Diary (April 18, 1945-June 19, 1946), copy in the Harry S. Truman Library of original in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library. Forrestal's diary entry for July 30, 1945, corroborates this recollection by Smith. Forrestal says Truman had talked "a good deal" about citizen soldiers and of destroying the "political cliques that run the Army and Navy." In the same conversation Forrestal recalls Truman describing West Point and Annapolis as "finishing schools." Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 88-89.

the chairman of the House Military Affairs Committee late in February. "This bill," Patterson wrote, "which is not in accord with the President's message and War Department policy with reference to universal military training, cannot be favorably looked upon by the War Department."[23] A week later Truman told a reporter that he had done all he could to get a UMT bill through Congress.[24] Except for a brief reference in a speech in April,[25] Truman seemed reconciled to letting universal training languish in the Congress until later in the year.

On October 2, 1946, the War Department issued a new plan of universal military training. The basic principle remained unchanged--one continuous, compulsory year of training for all male citizens, eighteen to twenty years old. The difference was an emphasis now placed on a civilian board that would control the non-military phases of the training program.[26] In a memorandum to Patterson a few days after the new UMT plan was made public, Truman enclosed copies of two letters written by Thomas Jefferson,

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[23]Patterson to Andrew J. May, February 28, 1946, RG407, AG353 (10 Dec. 1945), National Archives.

[24]Item No. 53, Press Conference, March 8, 1946, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1946, 145.

[25]Item No. 76, President's Army Day speech in Chicago, April 6, 1946, ibid., 187-88.

[26]Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 448-49.

which spoke of a need for a prepared citizenry. "It seems to me," Truman wrote, "that these letters . . . could be used effectively in our proposed campaign for Universal Military Training, as these letters show Jefferson was not quite the pacifist he was supposed to be."[27]

One phase of the "proposed campaign" mentioned in the note to Patterson was undoubtedly Truman's announcement on December 19 that he had created a nine-member, "President's Advisory Commission on Universal Training." Although the group was obstensibly an impartial body created to examine objectively the question of universal military training, it was, in fact, composed of nine persons presold on the UMT concept.[28] The suggestion that such a committee be created had been made by Patterson to

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[27]The letters enclosed were Jefferson to Thaddeus Kosciusko, February 26, 1810; Jefferson to James Madison, June 18, 1813. Truman had inadvertently referred to the program as Universal Military Training. He had come to avoid the term, "military," ordinarily preferring to speak of it as his "Universal Training" program. Truman to the Secretary of War, October 9, 1946, RG107, OSW, RPP/White House, National Archives.

[28]Arthur A. Ekirch, Jr., The Civilian and the Military: A History of the American Antimilitarist Tradition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), 281. Hereinafter cited as Ekirch, Civilian and the Military.

the President in November, 1945.[29] Truman liked the idea and told the Secretary of War to choose prospective members, in conjunction with the Navy and Coast Guard. Following his approval and the appointees' acceptances, Truman said he would announce the new commission from the White House, thus drawing the attention of the country to the civilian aspects of the program.[30]

The President brought the Advisory Commission to the White House the day following the announcement of its appointment. In remarks to the commissioners, later released to the press, Truman made it clear that he conceived the true purpose of such training to be the molding in young men of a sense of obligation to serve the state. He told the Commission Members that he did not think of it as universal military training: "I want that word military left out. The military phase is incidental to what I have in mind."[31] While the President consistently held that there was no relationship between UMT and

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[29]Patterson to the President, November 5, 1945, RG407, AG353, National Archives.

[30]Truman to the Secretary of War, November 13, 1945, Rosenman Papers, Subject File, 1945, Universal Military Training, Truman Library.

[31]Item No. 268, Remarks to the President's Advisory Commission on Universal Training, December 20, 1946, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1946, 509; New York Times, December 21, 1946. See also, Ernest Lindley, Washington Post, December 23, 1946; Truman, Memoirs, II, 534.

the draft, the War Department did not agree. When queried for reaction to the new Commission, a War Department spokesman said that the Army would not request further continuation of Selective Service, which was due to expire in March, 1947, until congressional intentions on universal training were clear. The spokesman added that if the UMT program was not forthcoming, then a continuation of the draft would be inevitable.[32]

The Advisory Commission on Universal Training did not submit its recommendations to the President until the end of May 1947. However, on March 3 Truman asked Congress to allow Selective Service to lapse on March 31. He said that after consulting with Secretaries Forrestal and Patterson, he had decided to take the gamble on an all-volunteer force. He did not mention that Selective Service Director Lewis Hershey and the Army's Chief of Personnel, General W. S. Paul, were adamantly opposed.[33] Congress did allow the draft to expire, and the nation was without peacetime conscription for fifteen months.

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[32]New York Herald-Tribune, December 21, 1946.

[33]Lewis B. Hershey to Truman, December 5, 1946; Patterson to Truman, February 4, 1947; Marshall to Truman, February 6, 1947, all in Clifford Papers, Subject File, National Military Establishment: Selective Service, Truman Library. See also, New York Times, March 4, 1947; Washington Post, March 15, 1947. Text of Truman's special message to the Congress is in Public Papers . . . Truman, 1947, 163-64.

The report of Truman's Advisory Commission, 445 pages long, was submitted May 29, 1947.[34] The report was unique only in its length and the explicitness of its procedural recommendations. In general principles it differed little from the Truman-War Department proposals. Historian Arthur Ekirch has offered an intelligent critique of the report and the philosophy governing the nature of its recommendations:

> . . . the idea of universal service to the state, which the President urged his Advisory Commission to recommend, was also a totalitarian concept that had been much used by fascist and communist regimes. The Advisory Commission in its report denied the charge of totalitarianism and contended that universal training was no more un-American, militaristic, or compulsory than public education. But the commission's emphasis upon the responsibility of the individual to the state, though fully in accord with European practice, represented a relatively new idea in the United States. Whatever the mutual obligations of the citizen and his government, the American tradition had always been one in which the state was considered the servant, and not the master of the people. The universal service advocated by the Presidential Commission not only contradicted this tradition, but it also envisaged a type of service that, no matter how disguised, was basically for military purposes.[35]

The impact of the Advisory Commission report was nugatory. A Republican Congress was not receptive to an Administration measure with an estimated cost of two billion dollars annually which many described as

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[34]Summary of report is in New York Times, June 2, 1947. See also, Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 449-50; Truman, Memoirs, II, 54-55.

[35]Ekirch, Civilian and the Military, 281-82.

militaristic and totalitarian. Truman continued urging UMT legislative action throughout 1947, but with only occasional allusions to the stillborn report of his Advisory Commission on Universal Training.[36] The report had at least one staunch advocate in James Forrestal, then Secretary of Defense, who, in December of 1947, sent a memorandum to the Army, Navy and Air Force Secretaries strongly endorsing the study. Forrestal suggested that every officer in the military should read the complete report and have a thorough knowledge of its content, which he should then disseminate to all Armed Services enlisted personnel.[37]

The President began 1948 as he had begun the two preceding years, offering up his--by now--traditional plea to the Congress for enactment of universal military

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[36]Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 450. Truman pubicly urged UMT passage regularly. For example, in his second "State of the Union" message, January 6, 1947, see Public Papers . . . Truman, 1947, 11-12. In June, speaking at Princeton's Bicentennial, the President made the need for universal training the subject of an address which was not too warmly received, according to Alfred Friendly in the Washington Post, June 18, 1947. For text of Truman's Princeton Address, see New York Herald-Tribune, June 18, 1947. Ten days later, Truman told reporters that UMT was essential for national security. New York Times, June 27, 1947. The same theme was repeated by the President in statements made in August and October. See New York Times, August 29, 1947; Washington Post, October 25, 1947.

[37]Forrestal to Secretary of the Air Force, et. al., December 18, 1947, RG340, Office of the Secretary of the Air Force (SAF), AF381 (18 Dec. '47), National Archives.

training.[38] Congress was now ready to consider such legislation, motivated by a growing tension in international affairs. The House Armed Services Committee favorably reported out a Universal Training Bill, designated H.R. 4278, which was in general accord with Administration desires. For three weeks in March the Senate Armed Services Committee held extensive hearings on UMT and Selective Service.[39]

On March 17, 1948, the President spoke to a Joint Session on the threat to world peace and the independence of European states, caused by expansionist activities of the Soviet Union. Truman recommended to Congress three measures which he felt were needed to improve the nation's strength and maintain the free, democratic character of the nations of Europe. The three measures Truman described were passage of the program for economic assistance for Europe, enactment of universal training legislation, and temporary re-enactment of selective

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[38]Item No. 5, Annual Budget Message to Congress, Fiscal Year 1949, January 12, 1948, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1948, 26.

[39]Forrestal to Walter Andrews, April 2, 1948, RG330, Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), CD9-1-4, National Archives.

service legislation.[40]

The Administration's draft of a bill that would have provided both renewal of Selective Service (Title I) and establishment of UMT (Title II) was submitted to the House by Secretary Forrestal early in April.[41] After much struggle Congress passed the Selective Service Act in June, providing for its termination in two years. However, the universal training proposal failed again. It failed for the same reasons it had in the past, and also, because 1948 was an election year. It may have failed as well because many agreed with the editorialist who wrote: "UMT as outlined by the Army's own program is nothing but a

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[40] The JCS had advised the President that voluntary enlistment had failed and that they considered restoration of the draft essential. Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 393-94, 397-98. See also, Paul Y. Hammond, "Super Carriers and B-36 Bombers: Appropriations, Strategy and Politics," in Harold Stein (ed.), American Civil-Military Decisions: A Book of Case Studies (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1963), 473-76. Hereinafter cited as Hammond, "Super Carriers and B-36 Bombers." For text of Truman's special message to the Congress, see Item No. 52, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1948, 182-86. Truman emphasized the urgency of his requests in New York City the same day (March 17) in an address before the Society of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. Truman, Memoirs, II, 242-43. Text of this address appears in New York Herald-Tribune, March 18, 1948.

[41] Forrestal to Walter Andrews, April 2, 1948, RG330, OSD, CD9-1-4, National Archives.

gigantic boondoggle, a glorified CCC camp."[42]

Truman's and the Pentagon's faith in the value of universal military training never flagged in the years that followed.[43] Efforts to obtain legislation eventually ceased, only to be revived during the Korean War. On August 29, 1950, Truman found himself in the peculiar position of asking the Congress not to take action creating a UMT program. His reason, as he explained in identical letters to the Chairmen of the Senate and House Armed Services Committees, was that the demands of the Korean conflict would make it impossible for the military to provide the installations and personnel necessary to implement the program. Truman asked that action on UMT be deferred until 1951.[44]

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[42] Indianpolis Star, March 18, 1948. See also, Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 450. Truman signed the Selective Service Act into law on June 24, 1948, less than a day after passage. See New York Times, June 25, 1948.

[43] For example, in October of 1948, Omar Bradley, then Army Chief of Staff, was still strongly urging that the services should try to obtain enabling legislation on UMT in the next Congressional session. Bradley to Secretary of the Army (Royall), October 4, 1948, RG330, OSD, OD9-2-4, National Archives. Secretary of Defense Forrestal, while believing in the UMT idea, had given up hope of getting it through Congress by the summer of 1948. See, for example, diary entries for April 24, 30, 1948, in Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 425-28.

[44] Item No. 225, Letter to Committee Chairmen on Universal Military Training, August 29, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 601-602. See also, item No. 272, Remarks to members of the National Guard Association, October 25, 1950, ibid., 687-89.

The Secretary of Defense, on January 17, 1951, transmitted to Lyndon B. Johnson, then Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Preparedness Subcommittee, a draft of legislation authorizing "Universal Military Service and Training."[45] The bill finally passed in altered form on June 19, 1951, as an amendment redesignating the Selective Service Act of 1948 as the "Universal Military Training and Service Act." As amended, the act extended the life of the Selective Service System until 1955 and authorized the establishment of a universal military training system at some time in the future. But UMT could not be implemented until it received further specific approval from the Congress.[46] Such approval has never been forthcoming; the United States remains the only major power without a system of UMT. The Spartan concent of universal military training and service has died.

There should be no mourners at the bier of UMT. The concept is antithetical to democratic principles. Truman's resort to peacetime conscription as a means of replenishing the military, while not as undesirable, did

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[45]Marshall to Johnson, January 17, 1951, RG340, AF353, UMT, National Archives.

[46]Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 451; Robert Payne, The Marshall Story: A Biography of General George C. Marshall (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1951), 314-16. Hereinafter cited as Payne, Marshall Story.

result in a disproportionate obligation for service falling on certain socio-economic groups. General Marshall recognized this when he wrote that "in fairness it must be stated that the Selective Service system has imposed on too few the entire burden of military service."[47] Truman erred in his belief that universal military training was the answer to the obvious inequalities in Selective Service. He erred, not out of any meanness of heart, but from an oversimplified view which failed to recognize that a sense of dedication to public service must come from within, as his had; it cannot be compelled by governmental ordinances.

James Forrestal once confided to his diary a belief that President Truman urged unification of the armed services not so much for the greater economy and efficiency that would result but more as a means of selling universal military training to the Congress as part of the unification "package."[48] The Navy Secretary compounded the slur by adding that the President's thinking on both subjects was clearly based on his World War I and National Guard

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[47]"Recommendations of the Secretary of Defense of Materials for Inclusion in the State of the Union Message," draft attached to a letter of transmittal, John G. Adams to Charles A. Coolidge, November 26, 1951, RG330, OSD, 031.1, National Archives.

[48]Diary Entry, July 30, 1945, Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 88.

experiences. By way of a compliment, Forrestal added that his impression was that Truman ". . . is not close-minded nor will he hold rigidly to his own views."[49] This account, written in mid-1945, serves as an apt paradigm of the attitude encountered by Truman in his long struggle to unify the military services.

Harry Truman was not the father of the unification concept, but the present-day military command structure in the United States is uniquely his progeny. In the early years of World War II Truman served as a member of the Military Affairs and Appropriations Committees of the Senate, as well as chairman of the Special Committee to Investigate the National Defense Program. These functions afforded him a sweeping view of the waste, inefficiency and duplication that redounded from having two separate military departments.[50]

Truman became an active civilian proponent of service unification when an article appeared under his name in Collier's in the midst of his vice-presidential campaign. The Senator wrote that he had not just lately

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[49] Ibid., 89.

[50] Truman, Memoirs, II, 46-47; Truman, "Our Armed Forces Must Be Unified," Collier's CXIV (August 26, 1944), 63. Hereinafter cited as Truman, "Our Armed Forces Must Be Unified." See also, Buchanan, United States and World War II, II, 315.

embraced the issue, but had helped draft an American Legion policy that had been advocating integration of forces for years. Truman's basic thesis was that the Pearl Harbor disaster and subsequent "bitter lessons" of the war years had ". . . revealed the danger that lies in a division of responsibilities."[51] The future commander in chief felt that the services should be coordinated under a single civilian secretary, administratively assisted by three undersecretaries for the ground, sea and air forces. Truman's plan as described in the Collier's article envisioned a General Staff replacing the extant Joint Chiefs of Staff (which expended its energies trying to conciliate independent commands). His General Staff would be concerned solely with tactical and strategic control of all forces, rather than interservice rivalries.[52] Less than nine months after the publication of this article, its author found himself in a position to implement his beliefs:

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[51]Truman, "Our Armed Forces Must Be Unified," 16.

[52]Ibid., 16, 63-64. See also, Hoare, "Truman," 184-85. Truman's own summation of his article appears in his Memoirs, II, 47-48. Questioned about this article in a press conference (August 30, 1945), the President admitted his statements about a lack of cooperation between commands at Pearl Harbor were incorrect, but that he still believed, as he always had, in unity of command. Item No. 118, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 246-48.

> One of the strongest convictions which I brought to the office of President was that the antiquated defense setup of the United States had to be reorganized quickly as a step toward insuring our future safety and preserving world peace. From the beginning of my administration I began to push hard for unification of the military establishment. . . .
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> It was my opinion that the Commander in Chief ought to have a co-ordinated and co-operative defense department that would work in peace and in war.[53]

Just as American conduct of the Spanish-American War had made obvious the need for the Root Reforms which followed and World War One experience brought passage of the National Defense Act of 1920, so, too, did the Second World War reveal flaws in the military structure that generated planning for a unified command structure. This planning had begun more than a year before Truman took office.[54] In April 1944 the House Select Committee on

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[53]Truman, Memoirs, II, 46-47. See also, Elmer E. Cornwell, Jr., "The Truman Presidency," in Richard S. Kirkendall (ed.), The Truman Period as a Research Field (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1967), 221-22. Hereinafter cited as Cornwell, "The Truman Presidency."

[54]For a description of the National Defense Act of 1920, which was a re-organization of the U.S. Army's command system only, see American Military History, 407-409. While there was some thought given to unification prior to the Second World War, the results of such activity were inconsequential. The Morrow Board (1925) and the Baker Board (1934), while principally concerned with national aviation policies, did comment on the feasibility of integration of the armed services. The former concluded that unification would create too complex and unwieldly a structure. The latter made some passing allusions to a need for greater

Postwar Military Policy opened hearings on a War Department plan of unification.[55] The Army proposed the establishment of an Armed Forces Department administered by a Secretary, who would be designated as the principal adviser to the Congress and President on all defense subjects relevant to politics and administration. The Joint Chiefs of Staff would advise the President on funds allocation and other budgetary matters.[56]

The Navy Department, represented by Secretary Forrestal,[57] opposed the merger plans. Forrestal argued that such a unitary system might be too cumbersome for efficient management and that duplication was not always undesirable. The Navy was also against the proposed

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coordination between the armed services. Excerpts from both the Morrow and Baker Board Reports can be found in Walter Millis (ed.), American Military Thought (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1966), 387-417, passim. Hereinafter cited as Millis (ed.), American Military Thought.

[55]Usually called the "McNarney Plan," after Lt. General Joseph T. McNarney, Deputy Chief of Staff, who presented the plan. Representatives from the House Naval Affairs and Military Affairs Committees made up the membership of the Select Committee, chaired by Clifton Woodrum.

[56]Rogow, Victim of Duty, 187-88. See also, U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, National Defense Establishment: Unification of the Armed Services, Hearings on S. 758, 80 Cong., 1 Sess., 1947, Pt. 1, 7-8. Hereinafter cited as Hearings, National Defense Establishment.

[57]When the hearings began Forrestal was Under Secretary of the Navy. But the Secretary, Frank Knox, resigned in April, 1944, for reasons of health and FDR named Forrestal to replace him.

establishment of a separate Air Force and felt, in general, that the time was not opportune for reorganization. Forrestal felt that "further study" was necessary. The Secretary also told the committee, in what became a recurrent theme for him, that the job of administering such an organization would be too much for any one man: "There is no single human being capable, in my judgment, of sitting on all that. . . ." (Forrestal became the first Secretary of Defense and the pressures of the job apparently brought on a general breakdown in his mental condition which caused him to leave the post.)[58] The Select Committee report to the House (June 15, 1944) agreed with the Navy argument that the time was not right for legislation and urged the armed forces to make further studies into the means for implementing unification.[59]

In a meeting with the President, June 13, 1945, Forrestal asked for his opinion on the proposals to consolidate the War and Navy Departments. Truman told him that he had some definite views on the subject and intended to work with his staff on a legislative proposal

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[58]Rogow, Victim of Duty, 188-89. Forrestal committed suicide by defenestration shortly after resigning as Secretary of Defense.

[59]Hearings, National Defense Establishment, Pt. 1, 5.

as soon as he was finished with the Potsdam Conference.[60] Six days later Forrestal created a committee, headed by a trusted adviser, Ferdinand Eberstadt, to consider the various means of achieving interservice coordination and to recommend the most effective postwar structure.[61] Forrestal intended that the Navy should have its own plan for unification as a counter to the Army proposal as well as Truman's, apparently. Forrestal was wary of what the President's stand would be, since he knew his pre-Presidential views on unification and knew, too, that Truman's latest comments had been similar to those being advanced in the Army proposal.[62]

The Eberstadt Committee submitted its report to the Secretary of the Navy on September 25, 1945. The report discounted the value of an Army-Navy merger and proposed instead that there be three separate departments of War, Navy and Air. Each department would have a civilian secretary with cabinet rank, aided by an under secretary and an assistant secretary. The three departments would be coordinated by numerous interdepartmental committees and agencies. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, then existing

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[60]Diary Entry, June 13, 1945, Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 62.

[61]Forrestal to Eberstadt, June 19, 1945, quoted in ibid., 63.

[62]Rogow, Victim of Duty, 191.

only by executive order, would be made permanent on a statutory basis and would have principal responsibility for coordinating the activities of the three armed services. Recognizing the need for a closer conjunction of military with foreign policy, the Eberstadt Report recommended the establishment of a "National Security Council." This council was to be presided over by the President as chairman with the membership comprised of the Secretaries of State, War, Navy and Air, the Joint Chiefs and the heads of the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Resources Board.[63]

Forrestal was pleased with Eberstadt's efforts since it emphasized coordination and cooperation rather than unification, which the Navy saw as a threat to its position. The Senate Military Affairs Committee convoked unification hearings beginning on October 17, 1945. Forrestal immediately presented the Eberstadt Report--slightly modified--as the Navy plan for unification. Not to be outdone, General J. Lawton Collins presented

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[63]"Excerpts from the Eberstadt Report," in Henry M. Jackson (ed.), The National Security Council: Jackson Subcommittee Papers on Policy-Making at the Presidential Level (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), 291-94. Hereinafter cited as Jackson (ed.), National Security Council. See also, Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 455; Rogow, Victim of Duty, 193-94; Hearings, National Defense Establishment, Pt. 1, 6, 8-9.

another, more detailed, War Department merger plan.[64]

The widely-divergent proposals provided the casus belli and the Senate hearings provided the arena for what reporters were soon calling "The Battle of the Potomac."[65] Secretary of War Patterson had opened the hearings on October 17 by asserting his conviction that a single department of armed forces would enhance future national security.[66] General Marshall followed Patterson in the hearings and went a step further in holding that without unification ". . . there can be little hope that we will be able to maintain through the years a military posture that will secure for us a lasting peace."[67] The Army Air

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[64]St. Louis Post-Dispatch, October 22, 1945. For a summary of Forrestal's testimony in favor of the Eberstadt Plan and against the Army's proposals, see Rogow, Victim of Duty, 193-94. For the principal proposals of the War Department, see Hearings, National Defense Establishment, Pt. 1, 6, 9. A transcript of General Collins' statement to the committee is in Clifford Papers, Subject File, Unification, Truman Library.

[65]Newsweek (November 19, 1945), quoted in Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 456.

[66]New York Times, October 18, 1945. A transcript of Patterson's testimony is in Rosenman Papers, Subject File-1945, Unification of the Armed Services, Truman Library.

[67]Marshall's testimony, October 18, 1945 (Transcript), Clifford Papers, Subject File, Unification, Truman Library. General Eisenhower was in full agreement with Marshall on all points. He warned the committee that failure to unify would invite another Pearl Harbor. See W. H. Lawrence, New York Times, November 17, 1945.

Force (AAF) was particularly enthusiastic over the War Department plan, since it proposed establishing the Air Force as a separate military department. General officers of the AAF in the Pentagon were asked to write personal letters to key field commanders, keeping them "briefed" on the status of unification legislation. The Generals (Anderson, Norstad, Powers, Vandenburg) were even given a model letter written by General Everest and also a list of the commanders with whom they should correspond. The "individual touch" was emphasized, ". . . in order to prevent an inference that there is a concerted effort in Hq AAF to force field commanders to hew to the party line."[68] The Air Force's "party line," as presented in the hearings, endorsed the Army unification plan. General Arnold, in making his case, acknowledged that historically, the armed services had confronted each crisis, ". . . far from effectively, efficiently or economically organized," and that unification could solve this problem.[69]

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[68]H. W. Bowman to Hoyt S. Vandenberg, October 2, 1945, RG18, AAF, 312.1--Operations--1945, National Archives. See also, F. F. Everest to Nathan F. Twining, October 5, 1945, ibid.; Hanson Baldwin, "The Military Move In," Harper's Magazine, CXCV, No. 1171 (December, 1947), 488. Hereinafter cited as Baldwin, "The Military Move In."

[69]Statement by General of the Army H. H. Arnold (Transcript), Rosenman Papers, Subject File-1945, Unification of the Armed Services, Truman Library.

The Navy was not reticent in opposition to the Army plan. Admiral King, Chief of Naval Operations, told the Senate Committee that the Army plan was revolutionary. King also offered the observation that "any step that is not good for the Navy is not good for the country."[70] One of the basic contentions of Admirals Sherman and Leahy in their testimony was that there was no real need for unification since a unified command already existed under the President, functioning as Commander in Chief.[71] Just as the Air Force supported the Army for its own reasons, the Marine Corps defended the Navy plan, fearful that any subordination of the Navy would ultimately affect the Corps. Marine Commandant Alexander Vandergrift accused the proponents of unification of having a "blind faith" in something they did not understand.[72] Forrestal, who knew he was fighting a delaying-action against unification, wrote to the President and Secretary of War early in November, suggesting further study of unification by a presidential commission and an end to the "injurious

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[70]Chicago Tribune, October 26, 1945; Rostow, United States in the World Arena, 175.

[71]"Unification of the Armed Services: Analytical Digest of Testimony Before the Senate Military Affairs Committee, 17 October to 17 December, 1945," (no author, no date, mimeographed), 105. Copy in RG330, OSD, Office of the Director of Administration, National Archives.

[72]Baltimore Evening Sun, October 25, 1945.

acrimony" of the interservice bickering.[73] Forrestal described in his diary a meeting with Truman on November 21, in which the merger was discussed: "I told the President I had no brief in behalf of the Navy, that what I wanted was the best answer for the country."[74] However, since it was Forrestal who had also proposed "further Study" of unification over a year and a half earlier to the Woodrum Committee, his self-proclaimed objectivity is suspect.

With each service adamantly holding to its original, uncompromising position, the rhetoric became repetitious and the dialogue embittered, throughout the fall of 1945. A wise editorial writer suggested in late November that it was time for this unseemly dispute to end:

> The case for and against the proposed unification of the armed services of the United States in a single Department of National Defense, or National Security, now has been largely presented to the Congress and to the American people. The Secretaries of War and Navy, the Army and Air Force's Chiefs of Staff, the Navy Chief of Naval Operations and most of the high echelon . . . have presented their views before the Senate Military Affairs Committees. . . .
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> The principle of unity of command is sound. It has been proven in war. No valid arguments have been presented against it. It should be adopted promptly. . . .[75]

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[73]Forrestal to Truman, November 8, 1945, RG107, Office of the Secretary of the Army (OSA), Single Department-National Defense, National Archives. See also, Forrestal to Patterson, November 9, 1945, ibid.

[74]Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 115-16.

[75]New York Times, November 20, 1945.

Until mid-December Truman remained an interested observer of the Army-Navy struggle, not interfering publicly or privately, although by the end of October he realized that Forrestal and the Navy had "double-crossed" him on unification.[76] The President was concerned, not about the dispute, but about the timing of his own message. At a news conference on November 20 a reporter asked if Truman had a view on military reorganization. He replied, "Yes, the Commander in Chief has a point of view, and he will express it at the proper time."[77] Earlier, the President had told Budget Director Smith that he wanted to wait until early in 1946, when the Congress had cleared up other legislative matters. He planned, Truman told Smith, to tie in unification with universal military training, which he had already proposed.[78]

Truman was compelled to change his timing on the unification message by circumstances: His UMT proposal was not being well received in Congress; the struggle between the services had reached extremes and was

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[76]Diary Entry, October 30, 1945, Smith Papers, Diary, copy in Truman Library of original in Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.

[77]Item No. 193, Press Conference, November 20, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 496.

[78]Diary Entry, October 30, 1945, Smith Papers, Diary, copy in Truman Library of original in Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.

generating unfavorable press commentary; and the Military Affairs Committee adjourned December 17 with the Army and Navy no closer to agreement. It was at this juncture that Truman recalls "seeing the need for presidential intervention. . . ."[79]

Truman's chief speechwriter, Samuel Rosenman, had begun working on a unification message in mid-November, based on preliminary drafts submitted by the Army and the Bureau of the Budget.[80] After several revisions, Rosenman followed the usual practice during Truman's administration, of sending the proposed presidential message around to all concerned agency and department heads, asking for their suggestions and criticism. In this instance, he probably wished he had not asked. For example, Admiral Leahy, who was against the merger in the first place, told Rosenman that he was particularly opposed to the proposed Chief of Staff of the Department of National Defense: "It

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[79]Truman, Memoirs, II, 49. While there is no real evidence, a suspicion lingers that Truman deliberately allowed the services to pick at each other in public. Whether or not he did, the effect of their internecine skirmishing was to strengthen the President's case for unification of the services.

[80]"I assume you wish to adopt the Army view," Rosenman wrote to the President. Rosenman to Truman, November 13, 1945, Rosenman Papers, Subject File-1945, Unification of the Armed Services, Truman Library. See also, Diary Entry, December 13, 1945, wherein the Budget Director received the same impression, Smith Papers, Diary, copy in Truman Library of the original in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.

is wrong and dangerous in that it effectively takes away from the President his constitutional responsibility as Commander in Chief."[81] The War Department and the Air Force expressed concern about the implications that the Joint Chiefs of Staff were to be discontinued.[82] Although the Budget Director disapproved, Truman insisted there be a civilian secretary in control of each of the component parts of the military establishment.[83] The frankest comments came from Secretary Forrestal: ". . . as the President knows, I am so opposed to the fundamental concept expressed in the message that I do not believe there is any very helpful observation that I could make on the draft you referred to me."[84] Forrestal did think that the President should not send the message up to Congress and that he should take no position on unification until more hearings had been held.[85]

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[81]Leahy to Rosenman, December 17, 1945, Rosenman Papers, Subject File-1945, Unification of the Armed Services, Truman Library.

[82]H. H. Arnold to Rosenman, December 18, 1945, ibid. See also, Howsrd C. Peterson to Rosenman, December 18, 1945, ibid.

[83]Rosenman to Harold Smith, December 17, 1945, ibid.

[84]Rosenman to Forrestal, December 17, 1945, ibid. See also, Forrestal to Rosenman, December 18, 1945, ibid.

[85]Forrestal to Rosenman, December 18, 1945, ibid.

Despite Forrestal's advice, Truman sent the military reorganization message to Congress on December 19, 1945. Truman laid down broad guidelines that he hoped would be followed, detailed nine reasons why he felt unification was necessary, stressing greater efficiency and economy and a more effective civilian control over the military. His one major break with the War Department proposals involved the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which he suggested replacing with a Chief of Staff for the Defense Department, who, along with the military commanders of each service, would form an advisory body to the Secretary of Defense and the President. He said that the Joint Chiefs and the other agencies that sought to coordinate the services during the war had not provided the necessary unity of command and been just slightly better than no coordination at all.[86]

Upon delivery of the President's message to Congress, the conjecture over what his position on the various aspects of reorganization would be ended for the services. They now had fixed points to rally around or

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[86]Full text is in Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 546-60. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 49-50; Cornwell, "The Truman Presidency," 222-23. For a description of the differences and areas of agreement between Truman's proposal and the Navy (Forrestal) Plan, see Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 119-20. For a summary of the Truman Plan, see Hearings, National Defense Establishment, Pt. 1, 9-10.

to develop arguments against. Truman also made it clear to Forrestal that the Navy was still free to discuss and attempt to amend the plan and that it was not his intention to "muzzle" anyone. The day following this conversation, December 19, the Secretary called Clark Clifford at the White House to get a clarification. Clifford explained that the President felt that civilian and naval personnel of the Navy Department should no longer publicly attack unification, since it was Administration policy. However, if called to testify before Congress, these individuals should feel free to express their opinions, after first explaining to the committee that they were expressing personal views under leave to do so granted by the Commander in Chief.[87] On the same day the Navy released to the press a memorandum to all Navy and Marine officers ordering them to refrain from all public criticism of unification except when testifying before Congress.[88] At a press conference on December 20 Truman had to explain to reporters that it was not his intention to prevent further discussion of unification, as long as those discussing the subject made it clear they were expressing

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[87]Diary Entries, December 18, 19, 1945, Millis (ed.) Forrestal Diaries, 118-19.

[88]Ibid. See also, New York Mirror, December 20, 1945.

only their personal views.[89]

With few exceptions, the public controversy abated.[90] In the next few months, sincere efforts were made to reconcile differences. As an example, late in January, 1946, General Eisenhower, who had replaced Marshall as Army Chief of Staff in November, 1945, reported to Patterson on the progress being made toward coordination of activities with the Navy. Eisenhower said that he had discussed the reorganization of several joint boards and committees with Forrestal on at least two occasions.[91] In March 1946 the protagonists of the interservice controversy, Forrestal and Patterson, met together in another effort to reach an accommodation consonant with Truman's guidelines. The Navy Secretary said he would accept a Secretary of Defense with authority to coordinate the services, but with no authority

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[89]Item No. 221, Press Conference, December 20, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 565.

[90]The President learned, for instance, that Admiral Nimitz, who had replaced Admiral King as Chief of Naval Operations in November 1945 in comments at the British Embassy had said he would fight UMT and unification "to the last ditch." Truman said: ". . . I think it is pretty bad business for an Admiral in his position." Quoted in Diary Entry, February 28, 1946, Smith Papers, Diary, copy in Truman Library of the original in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.

[91]Memorandum, Eisenhower to the Secretary of War (Patterson), January 28, 1946, Eisenhower Papers, Personal File/Dwight D. Eisenhower (PF/DDE), Patterson folder, Eisenhower Library.

over administration, which was to reside exclusively in the Army, Navy and Air secretaries.[92] The Navy seemed willing, apparently, to accept the form, while rejecting the substance of unification. In a subsequent meeting with Eberstadt (Forrestal's deputy) Patterson made it clear that the Army would not accept the Navy's scheme. Patterson personally favored a complete consolidation into one military department, presided over by a single secretary.[93]

Forrestal had come around closer to Truman's view in his new willingness to accept a "Super-Secretary," albeit one without administrative functions. The polarity of the Army-Navy views, which could be characterized as consolidation versus coordination, was diminished somewhat by Forrestal's concession in the direction of unification. In the White House on March 18 Forrestal talked at length with Truman about their differences. The conversation

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[92]Eberstadt, "Memorandum of Discussions Between Judge Patterson, Mr. Forrestal, and Myself," March 14, 1946, RG107, OSA (Patterson), Single Department-Misc., National Archives. Forrestal made the same proposal to Senator Elbert D. Thomas, chairman of a subcommittee to draft a unification bill, in a telephone conversation on March 14. Forrestal found Thomas to be hostile and gained the impression he was, ". . . acting under orders from the President." Diary Entry, March 14, 1946, Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 147-48.

[93]Eberstadt, "Memorandum of Discussions Between Judge Patterson, Mr. Forrestal, and Myself," March 14, 1946, RG107, OSA (Patterson), Single Department-Misc., National Archives.

revealed that they were not too far apart on many points. Several of Eberstadt's original recommendations on the method for civil-military coordination were attractive to the President. In this meeting, Forrestal records having explained at length to Truman the Navy concept of the duties of the Secretary of Defense, adding, rather patronizingly, ". . . I think at the end he began to grasp what I was talking about."[94]

Following the President's message on unification in December of 1945, the Senate Military Affairs Committee had created a special subcommittee to draft legislation responsive to Truman's message.[95] In the first three months of 1946 the subcommittee drafted eight separate bills that were rejected. Finally, on April 9, 1946, the subcommittee reported out a ninth bill, S. 2044, the Thomas-Hill-Austin bill, which received a favorable vote in the Military Affairs Committee. The Thomas bill was an Administration measure, closely following Truman's recommendations.[96] Although most of those involved considered the proposed legislation a compromise, the Navy did not.

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[94]Diary Entry, March 18, 1945, Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 148-49.

[95]The subcommittee consisted of Elbert D. Thomas (Chairman, Utah); Warren Austin (Vt.) and Lister Hill (Ala.), see ibid., 146.

[96]Hearings, National Defense Establishment, Pt. 1, 6, 10.

In the subsequent hearings on S. 2044, all Navy witnesses were unanimous in their opposition.[97]

While Forrestal had come around to taking a much more conciliatory tack, naval officers were still adamantly opposed. They were convinced that, given the greater size of the Army and the greater glamour of the Air Force, the Navy would be submerged and subordinated in any reorganization such as that proposed in the Thomas bill. They sincerely believed that this unification would mean loss of the Marine Corps to the Army and Naval Aviation to the Air Force as a first step. The admirals' reactions to the Thomas bill caused a sharp counter-reaction from Truman at a press conference on April 11. A reporter asked if the Navy was justified in still fighting unification. The President said he did not think the Navy should continue to fight unification now that it was his announced policy. A follow-up question elicited a much more explicit response:

> Q. Mr. President, didn't you authorize Navy officers to speak against that?
> THE PRESIDENT. I did not. I authorized Navy officers to express their honest opinions. They are still authorized to express an honest opinion, but when the President of the United States, the Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy, sets out a policy, that policy should be supported by the Army--and War Department--and by the Navy Department. That doesn't

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[97]Truman, Memoirs, II, 50.

> mean that individuals are muzzled on their honest opinions. . . .
>
> We are trying to get the facts as they are, and facts are not in propaganda and lobbying, which has been going on to a very vast extent.[98]

Truman called in the Secretary of the Navy on April 17 for another conference on reorganization. The meeting was quite friendly, despite Truman's chagrin at the admirals. In fact, both Forrestal and the President agreed that all such activity should cease.[99] In the course of his talk with Truman, Forrestal expanded on his views of the single Secretary of Defense, seeing such an officer as judging all moot questions, prescribing procurement policies, planning the budget and ensuring the coordination of all services on the military and civilian levels. Forrestal came away from the meeting satisfied that Truman had not closed his mind to the Navy plan and confided to his diary, "Speaking personally, I am for unification."[100] Forrestal believed he had moved

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[98]Item No. 78, Press Conference, April 11, 1946, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1946, 194-95. In another press conference held on the 17th, Truman repeated his charge that the admirals were still actively lobbying and speaking against unification. Item No. 84, ibid., 204.

[99]Forrestal recorded in his diary that he had suggested that Truman order a halt to all such lobbying and other activities in a meeting on March 18. Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 149.

[100]Rogow, Victim of Duty, 197-98; Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 151-52.

Truman closer to his position on unification, but Eisenhower met with the President ten days later and came away with the impression that Truman ". . . was not weakening in the slightest degree in his stand on the matter."[101] Truman, an accomplished poker player, was clearly keeping his next move to himself.

On the day (May 13) that the Military Affairs Committee favorably reported the Thomas bill out to the Senate, Truman summoned Patterson and Forrestal to a conference in the White House. At this meeting the President reminded the Secretaries of War and Navy of the necessity for them to reconcile their areas of dispute on unification. The President told Patterson that the idea for a single Chief of Staff recommended in the Army plan was "dangerous" and that he had decided against it. Truman then asked the two Secretaries to meet together and--by May 31--submit to him a list of the areas of agreement and disagreement between them.[102]

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[101]Eisenhower to Patterson, April 27, 1946, Eisenhower Papers, PF/DDE, Patterson folder, Eisenhower Library.

[102]Truman, Memoirs, II, 50. See also, Rogow, Victim of Duty, 201; Diary Entry, May 13, 1946, Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 160-62. In an editorial note, Millis (p. 162) holds that this meeting was a "decisive victory" for Forrestal, since he had long argued against a single chief of staff. This is probably true. However, as Rogow has stated in Victim of Duty (p. 201), Millis

Forrestal and Patterson worked studiously on unification, but were unable to report full agreement in their letter submitted on the deadline, May, 31, 1946.[103] The Secretaries were able to list eight major points of agreement: (1) establishment of a Council of Common Defense (eventually called the National Security Council); (2) establishment of a National Security Resources Board; (3) continuation of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; (4) no Single Military Chief of Staff; (5) a Central Intelligence Agency (under National Security Council); (6) coordination of military procurement and supply; (7) establishment of an agency to coordinate scientific research and development of the services; (8) establishment of an agency to review and adjust all military education and training. The areas of disagreement were also listed: (1) single military department; (2) three coordinate branches; (3) aviation; (4) future functions of Marine Corps.[104]

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goes much further, implying that the Army plan, unlike Eberstadt's, was not based on "careful study and analysis," nor could it stand the "test of time". In fact, neither plan survived the decade intact.

[103]For a detailed account of these deliberations, see Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 163-66.

[104]Patterson and Forrestal to Truman, May 31, 1946, Clifford Papers, Subject File, Unification: Correspondence-General, Truman Library. A copy is also in RG330, OSD, Unification of the Armed Forces, National Archives. Text is reprinted in Hearings, National Defense Establishment, Pt. 1, 180-83.

"I was deeply disappointed," Truman wrote in his Memoirs, "that no substantial progress had been made toward resolving this traditional conflict. . . ."[105] Although he may have been disappointed, Truman was not surprised. Nine days earlier he told the Budget Director privately that he really did not expect Patterson and Forrestal to come up with a satisfactory plan. The President agreed with Smith's observation that there was little possibility of getting the unification measure through Congress before adjournment, in any event.[106] Truman had determined that whatever proposals the Army and Navy submitted, he was not going to compromise very much with the fundamentals of his own unification plan. Since the joint letter of May 31 acknowledged the impasse existing between the military departments, Truman elected to "settle personally" the differences between them.[107]

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[105]Truman, Memoirs, II, 50.

[106]Diary Entry, May 22, 1946, Smith Papers, Diary, copy in Truman Library of original in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library. On May 15, Forrestal received a joint letter from Senator David Walsh, Chairman of the Senate Naval Affairs Committee and Representative Carl Vinson, Chairman of the House Naval Affairs Committee, stating their belief that any unification measure could get through Congress if it proposed a single department of the armed forces. Walsh's committee opened hearings on S.2044 on April 30 and closed them July 11, 1946. The bill was not reported out of committee. Hearings, National Defense Establishment, Pt. 1, 6-7.

[107]Diary Entry, May 22, 1946, Smith Papers, Diary, copy in Truman Library of original in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 50.

Resolution of the interservice dispute came with the announcement of the Commander in Chief's decisions, which were contained in letters dated June 15, 1946, addressed to Forrestal, Patterson, and the chairmen of the House and Senate committees dealing with military and naval affairs. Truman's identical letters to the Army and Navy secretaries described his solutions to the four areas of controversy:

> 1. Single Military Department.
> There should be one Department of National Defense. It would be under the control of a civilian who would be a member of the cabinet. Each of the services would be headed by a civilian with the title of "Secretary.' . . . They would not be members of the cabinet. Each service would retain its autonomy, subject of course to the authority and overall control by the Secretary of National Defense. . . .
> 2. Three coordinated services.
> There should be three coordinate services--the Army, Navy and Air Force. The three services should be on a parity. . . .
> 3. Aviation.
> The Air Force shall have the responsibility for the development, procurement, maintenance and operation of the military air resources of the United States with the following exceptions, in which responsibility must be vested in the Navy:
> (1) Ship, carrier and water-based aircraft essential to Naval operations, and aircraft of the United States Marine Corps.
> (2) Land-type aircraft necessary for essential internal administration and for air transport over routes of sole interest to Naval forces. . . .
> (3) Land-type aircraft necessary for the training of personnel for the afore-mentioned purposes.
> (4) United States Marine Corps.

> There shall be maintained as a constituent part of the Naval service a balanced Fleet Marine Force including its supporting air component. . . .[108]

Prior to making his decisions, the President had secured a solemn promise from Eisenhower, Patterson, Nimitz and Forrestal that they would support these decisions loyally before the Congress.[109] In his identical letters to the key congressional chairmen on June 15, Truman listed the twelve elements for a plan of unification that had his "unqualified endorsement." The twelve were made up, of course, from the eight areas of agreement between the services and the four areas that Truman decided for them. He concluded his message to the Congressmen with a futile plea: "It is my hope that the Congress will pass legislation as soon as possible effecting a unification based upon these twelve principles."[110] (The Congress adjourned August 3, without having taken action.)

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[108]Truman to Patterson and Forrestal, June 15, 1946, RG330, OSD, Hoover Commission Report, Unification of the Armed Forces, National Archives. Text is also printed in Hearings, National Defense Establishment, Pt. 1, 183-85. See also, Item No. 138, Letter to Secretaries of War and Navy on Unification of the Armed Forces, June 15, 1946, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1946, 306-307.

[109]These promises were made in a White House meeting on June 4, 1946. See Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 166.

[110]Truman to Andrew J. May, June 15, 1946, Clifford Papers, Subject File, Unification: Correspondence-General, Truman Library. The President sent identical letters to Senators Thomas and Walsh and Representative Vinson. Text

With the basis of reorganization now defined, Truman left the working out of the details mainly to Forrestal, Patterson and their staffs. The Secretary of War had replied to Truman's letter of June 15 immediately, promising his wholehearted support, and that of the War Department, toward implementation of the new military command structure.[111] The President summoned Forrestal on the nineteenth to inquire why he had not responded in kind. The Secretary explained that he was waiting to discuss a response with Admiral Nimitz. Forrestal and Nimitz still had several pronounced reservations, a point which the Secretary made clear in talking with the President. He also obliquely suggested to Truman that he was ready to resign if it would facilitate unification. Truman ignored the offer, but apparently insisted that Forrestal reply to his letter before departing to observe the atomic bomb tests at Bikini. The letter to Truman was dated June 24, the day of Forrestal's departure. In it, he accepted the President's decisions of the fifteenth,

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of the letter is printed as Item No. 137, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1946, 303-305. A copy of the President's letter also appears in RG330, OSD, Hoover Commission Report, Unification of the Armed Forces, National Archives. Senator Thomas amended S.2044 to conform with the recommendations in Truman's letter. See, U.S., Congress, Senate, S.2044, Committee Print (as amended), 79th Cong., 2nd Sess., June 26, 1946.

[111]Patterson to Truman, June 17, 1946, RG407, OSW, AG381, National Archives.

noting that there were difficulties ahead in drafting legislation, but that he felt they were surmountable.[112] That there was little War Department faith in Forrestal's reassurances is evidenced in a memorandum to Stuart Symington, Assistant Secretary of War for Air, from a legislative liaison officer in the Pentagon. The note indicates that the press commentary on the lack of a Navy Department response to Truman's letter forced Forrestal to reply. But Forrestal's "carefully worded letter to the President" left no doubt ". . . that he was still not enthusiastic for the program." Symington was also informed that the War Department's publicity campaign for the Thomas-Hill-Austin bill would continue throughout the Congressional recess.[113]

The War Department continued to campaign and so did Forrestal. On September 7 he wrote to Clark Clifford describing a meeting he had with Army Secretary Patterson in late August for the purpose of implementing the unification agreements, as ordered by the President. Forrestal

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[112]Forrestal to Truman, June 24, 1946, RG340, AF, Special Interest File 4A, National Archives.

[113]William E. Carpenter to Sturart Symington, August 2, 1946, ibid. Symington was specifically charged by the Secretary of War with responsibility for all matters relating to unifications. See Patterson to Symington, April 11, 1946, RG18, AF381, Unification, National Archives.

charged that the Army still held to a single military establishment headed by a secretary with total administrative control. Despite Truman's orders, Forrestal believed the Army was still out to curtail the Marine Corps. According to Forrestal, the Army felt that by drawing charts that detailed straight lines of command authority they could solve the problems of implementing unification.[114] Truman talked with the unhappy Secretary of the Navy on September 9. Forrestal told the President that he intended to introduce his own unification bill into the new Congressional session. The bill, Forrestal explained, would create a Secretary of Common Defense with a small executive staff. The Secretary would act as the Commander in Chief's deputy to the military departments. The functions of the President's deputy would be severely delineated by the bill, allowing him coordinate authority, while the three secretaries maintained administrative autonomy within their military services. Truman was no doubt surprised. Forrestal, ordinarily a meticulous diarist, did not record the President's reaction.[115] Truman must have realized by now that his directive of

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[114]Forrestal to Clifford, September 7, 1946, Clifford Papers, Subject File, Unification: Correspondence-General, Truman Library.

[115]Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, Editor's Note, 203.

June 15 had not had the desired effect. He ordered all of his top-level military advisers to meet with him at the White House the next day, September 10.

Truman opened the meeting by saying its purpose was to consider what legislative proposals were to be submitted to the upcoming session of Congress. He told those assembled that he was going to have Clark Clifford and Admiral Leahy draft a new unification bill. After all of them had had a chance to mull over the new bill, it would become administration doctrine and he would expect complete support for it in Congress. Truman then followed his practice of asking everyone present to express his views candidly.[116] Patterson said he was in full accord with the President's views. Eisenhower was generally noncommittal, repeating his belief that once the Secretary of Defense concept was accepted in principle, the details could be worked out later. Forrestal repeated his concept of this Secretary as he had expressed it to Truman earlier. He added that if a bill was introduced contrary to those principles, rather than support it by testimony before Congress, he would give the President his resignation. Truman said that he did not expect such a

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[116]In addition to Truman, present were Patterson, Leahy, Forrestal, Eisenhower, Nimitz, and Clifford.

necessity to arise.[117] The meeting adjourned and there the matter rested, unresolved, until early in 1947.

With White House pressure clearly on them to agree, Patterson and Forrestal finally produced a mutually-acceptable formula for unification, which they transmitted to the President on January 16, 1947. Truman replied to them on the same date, expressing his pleasure at the plan and his recognition that all services had made some concessions to achieve this "thoroughly practical and workable plan of unification. . . ."[118] The New York Times headlined the White House announcement as, "A Truman Victory--Patterson and Forrestal Compromise at Last on Unification Idea."[119] It was less a victory than

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[117]Diary Entry, September 10, 1946, Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 203-205.

[118]Forrestal and Patterson to Truman, January 16, 1947, Clifford Papers, Subject File, Unification (Part 2), Truman Library. Text of this letter is reprinted in Hearings, National Defense Establishment, Pt. 1, 103. Truman to Patterson and Forrestal, January 16, 1947, RG330, OSD, Hoover Commission Report, Unification of the Armed Forces, National Archives. Text of this letter is reprinted as Item No. 10, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1947, 99. Both letters are printed in full in U.S., Congress, House, Basic Elements of the Unification of the War and Navy Departments, 80 Cong., 1 Sess., Doc. No. 56 (January 20, 1947), 2.

[119]New York Times, January 17, 1947; New York Herald-Tribune, January 17, 1947. No attempt has been made to describe the struggles between the War and Navy Departments between the September meeting and this agreement, since it would be largely repetitious. The participants took the same stands detailed earlier and agreed only when they had to. The New York Times article cited above

it was a long-delayed step that Truman should have forced through sooner; there was no reason to allow protracted debate after his directive of June 15, 1946. But Truman had no intention of delaying any longer; he released the Secretaries' joint letter and his reply immediately, and the following day sent communications to the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate pro tempore. The letter to the Congressional leaders transmitted copies of the Forrestal-Patterson letter of January 16 and Truman's reply, by way of announcing that an agreement had been reached. Truman also assured the two Congressional leaders that members of his staff and the military were drafting the bill, which the President would submit to Congress for consideration as soon as possible.[120]

The military leadership, having taken almost a year and a half to agree on the principles of unification, now found it difficult to agree on the text of the unification bill. The chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee wrote to Secretary Patterson on February 21 asking why the bill was not ready. The Senator complained

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recounts much of the substance of these meetings, as does Admiral Forrest Sherman in his testimony on the bill. See Hearings, National Defense Establishment, Pt. 1, 159-67.

[120]Truman to Joseph W. Martin, January 17, 1947, printed in Basic Elements of the Unification of the War and Navy Departments, 102. See also, Item No. 12, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1947, 101-102.

that he was being hounded daily by his colleagues and reporters wanting to know why the Army and Navy could not agree on a bill. The Secretary of War was apparently not the cause of the delay, since he forwarded Senator Gurney's letter to Clark Clifford the same day, asking if he could help in any way to expedite submission of the bill to the Congress.[121]

Truman, tired of the bickering over details of the bill, ordered Clifford to expedite it. The following memorandum from Clifford to the Secretaries of War and Navy gives some indication of the President's mood:

> Enclosed herewith find three copies of the 8th draft of the bill entitled "National Security Act of 1947." The President asks that you kindly initial one copy indicating your approval and return the copy to him.
>
> Because of the urgency of this matter, it is hoped that you will be able to approve this draft today. If this is not feasible, you are requested to return a copy at the very latest by noon tomorrow.[122]

Both Forrestal and Patterson sent pledges of their full support of the draft on February 25; the President transmitted the bill to Congress the following

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[121]Chan Gurney to Patterson, February 21, 1947, Clifford Papers, Subject File, Correspondence-Unification Bill, Truman Library. See also, Patterson to Clifford, February 21, 1947, ibid. (The Armed Services Committee was established by a congressional reorganization at the end of 1946. It replaced the Military Affairs and Naval Affairs Committees.)

[122]Clifford to Secretaries of the War and Navy, February 24, 1947, Clifford Papers, Subject File, Correspondence-Unification Bill, Truman Library.

day.[123] Hearings on the unification bill, designated S. 758, were held before the Senate Armed Services Committee from March 18 to May 9, 1947. As anticipated, in light of Truman's express order, the testimony given by the hierarchy of the military departments was strong in endorsement of the draft bill.[124] The Secretary of War began his testimony by saying, "I give unqualified support to the bill to unify the armed forces. . . ," and went on at great length to explain why.[125] Forrestal's testimony was characterized by a cautious optimism. He restated his fear that the Secretary of Defense post was too much of a job for any one man. The Navy Secretary also warned the Senators that, "If any single item were withdrawn or

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[123]Patterson to Truman, February 25, 1947, ibid.; Forrestal to Truman, February 25, 1947, ibid. The President's letter of transmittal and the text of the draft bill are published as U.S., Congress, House, National Security Act of 1947: Communication from the President Transmitting a Draft of a Proposed Bill Entitled National Security Act of 1947, 80 Cong., 1 Sess., (February 26, 1947). The bill is fully summarized in Hearings, National Defense Establishment, Pt. 1, 11-12. Text of bill also appears in full in New York Times, February 28, 1947.

[124]"Before the bill was sent to Capital Hill . . . Mr. Truman sent orders to members of the armed services to support the measure." Washington Post, February 27, 1947. No such order has been located. The reference may be to Truman's remark in the meeting of September 10, 1946, that once the bill went up to Congress he expected everyone to support it.

[125]Hearings, National Defense Establishment, Pt. 1, 53ff.

modified to the advantage of any one service the mutual accommodation would be thrown out of balance."[126] With minor qualifications, those who followed--Generals Eisenhower, Norstad, Vandenberg and Spaatz; Admirals Nimitz and Sherman--gave their full support to the proposed bill. Even ex-Secretary of War Henry Stimson sent a long letter to Senator Gurney strongly supporting S. 758.[127]

After some small modifications in the Congress, the National Security Act of 1947 passed on July 25 and was signed into law by Truman the next day.[128] As finally passed, the act established the Army, Navy and Air Force as equal departments, each with its own civilian administrator, under the supervision and control of a single, civilian Secretary of Defense. The act provided for a major re-organization of the military, as well as for a more effective coordination of all the agencies and

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[126] Ibid., 22; Rogow, Victim of Duty, 204-205. See also, Washington Post, March 19, 1947.

[127] Stimson to Gurney, April 21, 1947, printed in Hearings, National Defense Establishment, Pt. 2, 457-60; Pt. 3, 709-710. Among the few who took issue with the bill were Marine Commandant Vandegrift, who wanted statutory protection for the traditional functions of the Marine Corps, and Admiral King, who opposed establishing the office of Secretary of Defense. See ibid., Pt. 2, 412; Pt. 3, 561; New York Times, May 8, 1947.

[128] Public Law 253, 80th Cong., 1st Sess., 1947. For a description of the several changes made in the act by the House, see Clifford to Truman, July 22, 1947, Clifford Papers, Subject File, Correspondence-Unification Bill, Truman Library.

departments of the national government--both civilian and military--that were concerned with national security.[129]

Title I of the National Security Act established three bodies divorced from the military establishment: (1) The National Security Council; (2) The Central Intelligence Agency; (3) The National Security Resources Board.

The National Security Council (NSC) was composed of the President, the Secretaries of Defense, State, Army, Navy and Air Force, the Chairman of the National Security Resources Board and other officers of the government as the President might choose to designate. The Council was specifically charged with the function of advising the President ". . . with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to the national security."[130] NSC was a lineal descendant of the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC) of World War II. The establishment of the National Security Council was a statutory recognition that the foreign and military policies of the nation are inextricably involved

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[129]William H. Baumer, "National Security Organization," The Military Engineer, XL, No. 269 (March, 1948), 5. Hereinafter cited as Baumer, "National Security Organization."

[130]"Staff Report of the Subcommittee on National Policy Machinery," December 12, 1960, in Jackson (ed.), National Security Council, 30.

and must be coordinated.[131] Although Marshall declared that the Council is the most significant policy-making body in the United States, the group has since served only in an advisory capacity to the Commander in Chief, who alone can make national policy, which, in turn, is eventually subject to, ". . . the support and substantiation of Congress and public opinion."[132]

In operation under Truman, the National Security Council functioned, to use Forrestal's description, ". . . not as a place to make policies, but certainly as a place to identify for the President those things upon which policy needs to be made."[133] Up until the time of the Korean War, Truman did not attend NSC meetings

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[131] Ibid. See also, Cornwell, "The Truman Presidency," 224-25; Hoare, "Truman," 188-89; Ernest R. May, "The Development of Political Military Consultation in the United States," Political Science Quarterly, LXX, No. 2, (June, 1955), 175. Hereinafter cited as May, "Development of Political Military Consultation." See also, John Fischer, "Mr. Truman's Politburo," Harper's Magazine, CCII, No. 1213 (June, 1951), 30. Hereinafter cited as Fischer, "Mr. Truman's Politburo."

[132] Hanson Baldwin, quoted in May, "Development of Political Military Consultation," 180; Marshall testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 584; Raymond P. Brandt, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, February 29, 1948. John Fischer wrote (in 1951), that Truman had delegated his authority over national policy to the NSC "to the uttermost limit," relying heavily, "almost pathetically," on his expert advisers. "Mr. Truman's Politburo," 31.

[133] Diary Entry, September 17, 1947, Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 316.

regularly, because his presence tended to inhibit debate. When he did attend Council sessions, he followed his customary practice of asking each person present to state his views; Truman seldom offered his opinion or accepted or rejected a recommendation during the course of a meeting.[134]

Title I of the National Security Act also established the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) under the National Security Council. The Administrative structure of this agency already existed as the "Central Intelligence Group" which Truman had created by a presidential directive in January, 1946.[135] The CIA was

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[134] Ibid., 320; Cornwell, "The Truman Presidency," 225. See also the testimony of Sidney Souers, Executive Secretary, NSC, to Senate Subcommittee on National Policy Machinery, May 10, 1960, excerpted in Jackson (ed.), National Security Council, 100, 108-109. For a fuller description of how Truman wanted the NSC to operate see a draft memorandum, Truman to Souers, (undated), Clifford Papers, Subject File, National Military Establishment--Security Council, Truman Library.

[135] Truman to Secretaries of State, War, and Navy, January 22, 1946, Clifford Papers, Subject File, National Intelligence Authority, Truman Library. The text of this directive is printed in Hearings, National Defense Establishment, Pt. 3, 495. See also, Truman, Memoirs, I, 98-99, 226; II, 55-58; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 157-61. The President was originally against changing the Central Intelligence Group (CIG) into a full-fledged agency, but was apparently persuaded to do so by Clark Clifford and members of the CIG, who found it ineffective in operation. Memorandum for file, George M. Elsey, July 17, 1946, Clifford Papers, Subject File, National Intelligence Authority, Truman Library.

assigned the task of coordinating the intelligence-gathering activities of numerous government departments, evaluating the information received and distributing this material to government officials with a need to know.[136] The director of the agency was normally the President's first appointment each morning, briefing him on intelligence developments in the past twenty-four hours: "This centralization of the gathering and reporting of data simplified the President's search for knowledge and added significantly to his powers in directing foreign policy."[137]

The third coordination body established by the National Security Act was the National Security Resources Board (NSRB). The Board was to be directed by a civilian chairman, with the membership to come from various departments and agencies of the federal government, as designated by the President. The NSRB was designed to coordinate all civilian, military and industrial factors

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[136]Baumer, "National Security Organization," 5; Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 459.

[137]O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 46; Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 14; John Hersey, "Profiles--Mr. President," Pt. 3, "Forty-Eight Hours," The New Yorker (April 21, 1951), 36. Hereinafter cited as Hersey, "Profiles," Pt. 3. For a critical view of the disadvantages of the CIA to a President, see James, Contemporary Presidency, 150-51.

necessary for an emergency mobilization.[138]

Title II, the other major section of the National Security Act, created the National Military Establishment (NME), headed by a civilian designated the Secretary of Defense. The new structure was to consist of the Departments of the Army, Navy and Air Force, each headed by a civilian secretary, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), a Joint Staff under the JCS, the War Council, Munitions Board and the Research and Development Board.

Under the direction of the Commander in Chief, the Secretary of Defense was charged by the bill with the following duties:

> (1) Establish general policies and programs for the National Military Establishment and for all of the departments and agencies therein;
> (2) Exercise general direction, authority, and control over such departments and agencies;
> (3) Take appropriate steps to eliminate unnecessary duplication or overlapping in the fields of procurement, supply, transportation, storage, health, and research;
> (4) Supervise and coordinate the preparation of the budget estimates of the departments and agencies comprising the National Military Establishment. . . .[139]

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[138]Charles Fairman, "The President as Commander-in-Chief," Journal of Politics, XI (February, 1949), 150. Hereinafter cited as Fairman, "President as Commander-in-Chief." See also, Baumer, "National Security Organization," 5; Cornwell, "The Truman Presidency," 224; St. Louis Post-Dispatch, November 14, 1947.

[139]Public Law 253, 80th Cong., 1st Sess., (61 Stat. 495); Report, "Six Months of Unification," RG330, OSD, D67-1-32, National Archives.

The most important body under the new military organization was the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). The Joint Chiefs were made responsible for formulating strategic plans and issuing military directives to the field commanders. Thus, the JCS both recommended military policy--as advisers to the Secretary of Defense, National Security Council and the President--and executed military policy through its directives to the unified field commands. In operation under Truman, all JCS directives, except for the most routine of matters, were cleared by the Secretary of Defense and had to receive final approval from the President before being dispatched to the field commands. The organizational structure of the NME removed the Chiefs of Staff from direct contact with the Commander in Chief, but Truman made it clear to all members of the JCS that they were to have direct, individual access to him, bypassing all the civilian hierarchal structure above them, whenever they felt it necessary.[140] Truman was once asked if the existence of the Joint Chiefs caused the Commander in Chief to rely less upon his own judgment and more on the advice of his generals. "Those professional military men are supposed to know the military

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[140] Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 150-51; Pt. 2, 904, 1256, 1475, 1606, 1622. See also, May (ed.), Ultimate Decision, Intro., xii-xv; Fairman, "The President as Commander-in-Chief," 151-52.

situation as it is in the world," Truman replied, "and they're supposed to inform the President, so that he can make up his mind on what he ought to do in case of an emergency."[141]

On the day he signed the National Security Act into law, July 26, 1947, Truman also issued Executive Order 9877, defining the specific functions of each branch of the armed forces. This was made necessary by the new structure which separated the Air Force from the Army and transferred certain powers to the Secretary of Defense.[142]

The changes made in the military departments also necessitated that Truman make several new appointments. He asked Robert Patterson, then Secretary of War, to become Secretary of Defense. Patterson, explaining that his strained financial condition would not permit his staying in government, refused the post and insisted upon resigning as Secretary of War (Army). The President asked

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[141] Truman Speaks, 23.

[142] For text of order see Clifford Papers, Subject File, Unification, Truman Library. Text is also in RG340, Secretary of the Air Force (S/AF), Special Interest File 4A, National Archives. See also, Item No. 159, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1947, 359-61; New York Herald-Tribune, July 27, 1947.

Forrestal to take the post and he accepted.[143] Thus the man who had consistently believed that the job was too much of a burden for any man to bear, became Secretary of Defense, his suicide two years later marking the tragic end of a self-fulfilling prophecy. With Forrestal's concurrence, Truman appointed Undersecretary of War Kenneth C. Royall, Secretary of the Army; Assistant Secretary of the Navy John L. Sullivan, Secretary of the Navy and Assistant Secretary of War for Air, Stuart Symington, as the first Secretary of the Air Force.[144] With the swearing-in of Forrestal as Secretary of Defense on September 17, 1947, the new military establishment became operational the following day.[145]

The organization which Truman had created through patience, persistance and compromise eventually revealed

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[143]Forrestal to Truman, July 28, 1947, Truman Papers, Official File (OF), 1285, Truman Library. Patterson's determination to resign and Royall's endorsement of Forrestal as Secretary of Defense is in a memorandum of a telephone conversation, Clifford (to Royall), July 24, 1947, Clifford Papers, Subject File, Unification, Truman Library. See also, Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 295-96, 298-99; Washington Post, July 19, 1947.

[144]Item No. 182, Press Conference, August 21, 1947, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1947, 420. A month earlier, Hanson Baldwin had correctly picked each one of these appointments, including Forrestal's, in the New York Times, July 20, 1947.

[145]Washington Post, September 19, 1947; New York Times, September 18, 1947.

major flaws that required reform legislation. But since it did centralize, streamline and clarify some of the command system, it served to aid the President in formulating military policy and getting that policy implemented. Truman was usually sure of what he wanted to do in a given situation; the NME told him how best to accomplish his objective. The new agencies established, particularly the National Security Council, performed a valuable function in recognizing that the formulation of military and foreign policies had to be considered as an integral process, particularly in the "Cold War" environment of the postwar period. The removal of the Joint Chiefs from direct access to the President, while not practical during time of war, provided a desirable dilution of strictly military viewpoints before they reached the Commander in Chief's desk. The National Security Act also, as one writer said, ". . . sharpened the weapons at the President's disposal and added a new dimension to his command of American foreign policy."[146]

Full unification was not achieved in 1947. This is true largely because of compromises and accommodations made to zealots concerned more with preserving the traditional powers of a particular service than with the

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[146]O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 47-48.

requirements of an effective national defense structure. As one critical Republican newspaper put it:

> President Truman has produced what he calls a merger plan for the army and navy. It is not a merger plan, it is in most respects a sham, and in some respects will contribute to the disintegration rather than the integration of our defense forces.
>
> The question of unification of the forces is a difficult one. It requires the most serious consideration. . . . Instead of a solution, Mr. Truman offers an evasion. . . .
>
> The attempt to relieve the President of the responsibility for conduct of national defense, by creating a secretary charged with that task . . . is futile because the President constitutionally is the commander in chief of the army and navy. He can delegate authority but he cannot delegate ultimate responsibility.[147]

While the editorial cited wrongly assumed that Truman intended to divest himself of decision-making responsibility, it correctly identified the act as something less than what the President said it was. For example, the Administration had often emphasized the economy that would be realized by unification when, in fact, the merger act was not designed to save money, nor did it, if mounting defense expenditures are a valid measure. Also, in its aim (as summarized by Walter Millis) ". . . to provide the United States with a coherent and self-consistent system of military-political direction, fully informed by the best intelligence

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[147] Chicago Tribune, January 29, 1947.

available," the unification act failed.[148]

The Office of Secretary of Defense proved to be too weak under the 1947 statute. Although the Defense Secretary was nominally the immediate superior of the three departmental secretaries, all four served equally on the National Security Council. In addition, the three secretaries were permitted to bypass their superior and bring their concerns directly to the President. As constituted, the office of Defense Secretary suffered from divided responsibility and a severe lack of authority. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, while obliged to advise the Secretary of Defense, were not controlled by him to any appreciable extent.[149]

The National Security Council was too vaguely defined to be effective. The NSC was supposed to advise the President on the coordination of all factors affecting the security of the nation, but it was not made clear whether the Council should initiate the consideration of policies or deliberate only when told to

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[148]Millis, Arms and Men, 280.

[149]The Hoover Commission Report on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1949), 187, 190-91. Hereinafter cited as Hoover Commission Report. See also, Rostow, United States in the World Arena, 176. Hanson Baldwin felt that the Joint Staff under the JCS was a "potentially dangerous" body, resembling the Greater German General Staff idea. "The Military Move In," 487-88.

consider a subject by the President. The NSC would be of value in working out long-range policy recommendations, but proved of little worth for the resolution of emergency situations. Also, a disproportionate number of NSC members (four), although civilians themselves, represented military departments. In operation under Truman, a representative of the JCS also attended each meeting and was heard, so that five of the seven or eight usually present at Security Council meetings approached each problem with a military orientation.[150]

That the Navy-Forrestal struggle against unification was justified is a moot question. The editor of Forrestal's papers, Walter Millis, thinks it was. Millis also holds that all the key participants were equally responsible and maintains that their actions ". . . delayed the nation for a year or two in grappling with the already dire state of world affairs."[151] The military leadership of the country spent over two years absorbed in what was often petty haggling over bureaucratic politics. In the end, Truman had accepted a poor structure that was not at all consonant with his own ideas on unification, primarily

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[150]O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 47-48; Baldwin, "The Military Move In," 484; Hammond, "NSC-68," 273-75, 277-79.

[151]Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, Editor's Note, 153.

because the struggle had intensified to a point where imposition of a thorough unification would have been destructive of military morale and politically explosive.[152]

In the final analysis, Forrestal had prevailed. The National Security Council, Central Intelligence Agency and National Resources Board were all originally proposed in the plan that Eberstadt's committee had drafted for Forrestal. He had lost out with the establishment of the Air Force as a co-equal to the Army and Navy Departments. But Forrestal succeeded in blocking the Army proposal for a single Chief of Staff for all the services. He had preserved the Marine Corps intact and kept most of Naval Aviation against the wishes of War Department planners. Most important of all, from Forrestal's point of view, he had managed to have the authority of the Secretary of Defense limited to coordination and an over-all, generally powerless supervision of the three service departments. The irony, of course, is that Forrestal, the first Secretary of Defense, had unknowingly performed an act of self-emasculation.

As Forrestal attempted to make a functioning office from the rigid statutory edifice he had fashioned, he became increasingly aware that changes would be necessary;

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[152]Rostow, United States in the World Arena, 175.

hence the Secretary asked for major revisions in both the National Security Act and the accompanying executive order defining the roles and missions of the services. Forrestal took action on the executive order first, in January 1948 by asking the service secretaries and the JCS to send him recommendations on a redraft of the order.[153] The Defense Secretary received the service secretaries' recommendations and finding them so diverse as to make coordination impossible, postponed any immediate proposal to the President.[154]

Late in February 1948 Forrestal told the President that he had not yet been able to get any agreement from the Joint Chiefs on the definition of functions of the services, but had instructed them to inform him on March 8 on the areas of disagreement between them, on which he would then make his own decisions. The problem required decision because Forrestal had to have a definition of the specific roles and missions of each service before he could

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[153]Forrestal to Secretaries of Army, Navy, Air Force, and Joint Chiefs of Staff, January 20, 1948, RG330, OSD, D70-1-5, National Archives.

[154]Forrestal to Secretaries of Army, Navy, Air Force, February 3, 1948, RG340, S/AF, Reorganization of NME, Special File 4A, DG520A53-307, National Archives. See also, Leahy to Forrestal, February 6, 1948, Clifford Papers, Subject File, National Military Establishment--Misc., Truman Library.

make budgetary allocations for carrying them out.[155] Whether the participants appreciated it at the time is unknown, but Forrestal was precisely in the same position he and Patterson had placed the President in May of 1946, of pressuring his subordinates for an agreement by threatening to decide the matter arbitrarily.

The Joint Chiefs reported their disagreements over service functions to the Secretary of Defense on March 8. To settle the matter, Forrestal assembled a conference with the JCS at Key West, Florida, from the eleventh to the fourteenth. The agreement finally reached was that each service would be assigned both primary and collateral functions. The primary functions were those for which a service would have clear-cut responsibility. Collateral functions were defined as instances where a service force acted to support or supplement another service in carrying out a primary function.[156] The Secretary of Defense submitted the new draft of armed services functions to the

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[155]Forrestal to Truman, February 27, 1948, RG330, OSD, D70-1-5, National Archives. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 52.

[156]NME Press Release No. 38-48, OSD, "Secretary Forrestal Announces Results of Key West Conference," March 26, 1948, Clifford Papers, Subject File, National Military Establishment--Misc., Truman Library. See also, Hammond, "Super Carriers and B-36 Bombers," 474-75. Present at Key West were Admirals Leahy and Denfield, Generals Bradley and Spaatz, their aides, and Secretary Forrestal.

President, asking that it be approved and requesting that Executive Order 9877 be recinded.[157]

Truman turned the draft over to Clark Clifford for study. Clifford recommended to him after consultation with Admiral Leahy, General Vaughan, the Bureau of the Budget, and others, that Forrestal's proposals be approved, subject to the addition of a phrase making it clear that Forrestal was issuing the statement "by direction of the President."[158] On April 21, 1948, the President revoked Executive Order 9877 and informed the Secretary of Defense of his approval of the new statement on roles and missions of the services.[159] On the same day Forrestal issued the

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[157]Forrestal to Truman, March 27, 1948, RG330, OSD, D70-1-5, National Archives.

[158]Clifford to Truman, April 13, 1948, Truman Papers, OF, 1285, Truman Library. Clifford sent a memorandum to the Secretary of Defense, informing him that the President approved, but wanted the phrase, "by direction of the President" added. Forrestal replied that such a phrase would have appeared in the original draft statement, ". . . but for the fact that we wished to refrain from using the President's name in the document prior to the time you and he had an opportunity to go over it." See Clifford to Forrestal, April 15, 1948, Clifford Papers, Subject File, National Military Establishment--Misc., Truman Library; Forrestal to Clifford, April 16, 1948, RG330, OSD, D70-1-5, National Archives.

[159]Truman to Forrestal, April 21, 1948, RG330, OSD, D70-1-5, National Archives. See also, Executive Order 9950, April 21, 1948 (13 F.R. 2191), which revoked the previous order. Truman incorrectly dates this order, "March 27" in his Memoirs, II, 52.

new statement to the Joint Chiefs and the service secretaries, formally completing the first revisions in the military reorganization of 1947.[160]

> During the first year of operation of the National Military Establishment it became apparent to me that the Secretary of defense needed additional authority to meet his responsibilities. It was clear that the act should be amended to define and strengthen the authority of the Secretary; to authorize an Under Secretary of Defense; to provide the Joint Chiefs of Staff with a chairman; to remove the service Secretaries from the National Security Council, leaving the Secretary of Defense the sole representative of the military; and to correct numerous administrative inefficiencies that a year's experience had revealed.[161]

What was clear to President Truman was also clear to Secretary Forrestal; the National Security Act had to be amended. In June 1948 Forrestal had ordered all of the leadership within the National Military Establishment to cooperate with the Committee of the Hoover Commission that was studying the organizational problems of the NME.[162]

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[160]Forrestal to Symington, April 21, 1948, RG340, S/AF, Special Interest File 4A, Reorganization of NME, National Archives. Text of statement of service functions is in ibid. See also, Joint Army and Air Force Bulletin, No. 13, May 13, 1948. For text of original draft, see New York Times, March 28, 1948.

[161]Truman, Memoirs, II, 52-53.

[162]Eberstadt to Forrestal, May 31, 1948, RG340, S/AF, Special File 4B, Hoover Commission--Reorganization of the NME, National Archives. Forrestal to Secretary of the Air Force, et. al., June 2, 1948, ibid. The Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government, directed by Herbert Hoover, was established by Congress at Truman's request, in December, 1945. Forrestal's old friend and associate, Ferdinand Eberstadt, was chairman of the Committee on the National Security Organization of the Hoover Commission. Truman, Memoirs, I, 486.

The Defense Secretary also sought recommendations from the departmental secretaries and the military chiefs, asking that they report to him by September 1.[163]

The reports submitted to Forrestal showed the usual divergence of views existing between the services. For example, Secretary of the Navy Sullivan advised "that no amendments to the National Security Act of 1947 be made at this time."[164] An opposite view was expressed by Air Force Secretary Symington. He proposed strengthening the Office of Secretary of Defense by changing the language of the unification act to eliminate divided responsibility and centralize authority with the Defense Secretary. Symington also proposed the appointment of an Under Secretary to assist Forrestal along with a single Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, responsible only to the Secretary of Defense. He also recommended that the law be changed to eliminate the Secretaries of Army, Navy and Air Force from membership in the National Security Council, leaving the Secretary of Defense as the sole representative of the

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[163]Forrestal to Secretaries of Army, Navy, Air Force, August 4, 1948, RG330, OSD, D70-1-5, National Archives.

[164]Sullivan to Forrestal, September 1, 1948, RG330, OSD, D70-1-5, National Archives.

National Military Establishment.[165] Symington's views, which were consonant with those held by both Forrestal and Truman, eventually became part of the amended act.

Forrestal, as he received these reports, was also cognizant of a report to the President on the status of national preparedness made by the National Security Council. The report informed Truman that the country was not internally secure nor was it ready in the event of a conflict with other large nations, a declaration of war by or upon this nation, or a normal or unconventional surprise attack.[166] It was with these several reports on his mind that Forrestal drafted a long memorandum to Truman on September 16, 1948. The Secretary reviewed the subject of national defense, which was his immediate responsibility under the President, and urged upon Truman his conviction that little could be done until the authority and responsibility were centralized in one office of the government. Forrestal had in Truman a sympathetic audience.[167]

The Secretary of Defense sent his first draft of

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[165]Symington to Forrestal, September 14, 1948, RG340, S/AF, Special File 4B, Hoover Commission--Reorganization of the NME, National Archives.

[166]The Security Council advisory is quoted in a memorandum, Forrestal to Truman, September 16, 1948, RG330, OSD, CD22-1-5, National Archives.

[167]Ibid. See also, Rogow, Victim of Duty, 270.

revisions in the National Security Act to the White House early in December.[168] Truman apparently asked Forrestal to revise his recommendations in cooperation with the Budget Director and his White House Counsel, for two subsequent draft proposals--January 24 and February 10, 1949--bear the signatures of Frank Pace, Jr. and Clark Clifford.[169] The President could derive some satisfaction from these recommendations, since, to a quite appreciable extent, they proposed the kind of unification that Truman had asked for in his original message to Congress of December 19, 1945.

The President sent a special message to Congress on March 5, 1949, requesting changes in the National Military Establishment. He based his request on the experience gained under the National Security Act and on the Hoover Commission Report on the National Security Organization, which had recently been submitted to the Congress. The message followed very closely the recommendations made in

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[168]Marx Leva to Clifford, December 3, 1948, Clifford Papers, Subject File, National Military Establishment: Security Council, Truman Library.

[169]The draft memorandum, dated January 24, 1949, is in Clifford Papers, Subject File, Unification: Amendment of National Security Act, 1949, Truman Library. The draft of February 10, 1949 can be found in Eisenhower Papers, PF/DDE, Truman folder (2), Eisenhower Library.

the February 10 memorandum from Forrestal, Pace and Clifford.[170]

After following the normal legislative process, without the interservice struggles that characterized the original reorganization, save for a continued opposition from the Navy Department, Truman's proposals became law on August 10, as the National Security Act Amendments of 1949. At the bill-signing ceremony, Truman said that he was pleased that the act had passed embodying most of the recommendations he had made, as well as several suggestions made by the Hoover Commission: "These provisions afford sound basis for further progress toward the unification of our Armed Forces and the unified management of our military affairs."[171]

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[170]Item No. 50, Special Message to Congress or Reorganization of the National Military Establishment, March 5, 1949, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1949, 163-66. See also, Forrestal, et. al., to Truman, February 10, 1949, RG340, S/AF, AF381, National Archives. A Defense Department staff paper comparing the Truman and Eberstadt recommendations is "Tab C" to a memorandum, Marx Leva to Forrestal, April 7, 1949, RG330, OSD, D70-1-5, National Archives. For the recommendations made by the Hoover Commission, see "Recommendations of Hoover Commission Report on National Security Organization," Clifford Papers, Subject File, National Military Establishment, Security Resources Board, Truman Library. See also the exerpted version of the Eberstadt Commission Report in Hoover Commission Report, 192-97.

[171]Item No. 177, Statement by the President Upon Signing the National Security Act Amendments of 1949, August 10, 1949, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1949, 417.

Under the terms of the act, the National Military Establishment became the Department of Defense, an executive department of the government. The Army, Navy and Air Force became military departments within the Defense Department, rather than executive departments. The powers of the Secretary of Defense were significantly expanded giving him a far more effective control over the entire military. He was also provided with an Under Secretary of Defense and three Assistant Secretaries, all civilians. The Chiefs of Staff lost their individual influence with the Commander in Chief, but the JCS gained a chairman who, as military adviser to the Secretary of Defense and the President, represented the views of the military to these officials and in the National Security Council. The post of Chief of Staff to the President was abolished, although the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in practice, would function in approximately the same capacity. A fourth title was amended into the National Security Act providing for uniform budgetary and fiscal procedures and the appointment of comptrollers for the Department of Defense as well as the Army, Navy and Air Force.[172]

James Forrestal never enjoyed the newly-obtained

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[172]Public Law 216, 81 Cong., 1 Sess., (63 Stat. 578). See also, Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 460-61; Hoare, "Truman," 187-88; Rogow, Victim of Duty, 270-71.

powers and prestige of the office. For reasons both personal and political, Truman forced Forrestal to resign. In a "Dear Jim" letter dated March 2 and made public the next day, Truman wrote of his reluctance to accept the resignation made necessary by ". . . those urgent personal considerations about which you have spoken to me so many times." The President indicated he was reassured to know that Forrestal would be ". . . standing by to give advice and counsel as we go forward in the work of enhancing the national security."[173] Forrestal would not be "standing by" very long; he was dead before the amendments passed.

There can be little doubt that Truman was right in urging unification. The reorganization brought many

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[173]Forrestal to Truman, March 2, 1949, Truman Papers, OF, 1285, Truman Library. Item No. 46, Letter Accepting Resignation of James Forrestal as Secretary of Defense, March 3, 1949, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1949, 160. Forrestal was apprently suffering from severe mental strain. In late 1948 and early 1949 he became increasingly indecisive and forgetful. He began to act quite erratically and paranoidal, convinced he was constantly being followed and that his telephone was tapped. Correspondents, with Drew Pearson taking the lead, had been attacking him and suggesting that Truman wanted him out of the Cabinet. See, for example, Pearson's column in the Washington Post, June 10, 1948. Forrestal had remained aloof from the 1948 presidential campaign, while the man chosen as his successor, Louis Johnson, had been the chief fund-raiser for the Democrats. Rogow claims that the Secret Service reported to Truman "late in 1948 or early in 1949," that Forrestal was suffering from "a total psychotic breakdown . . . characterized by suicidal features." Victim of Duty, 271-73, 277-80, 306. See also, Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 518-19, 544-47, 550-53; Hammond, "Super Carriers and B-36 Bombers," 492; Krock, Memoirs, 252-27.

desirable changes and ended much of the duplication and interservice bickering that was undesirable. Truman established a modern military structure capable of immediate and effective response to any threat to the security of the nation. However, in their unity the military services found greater strength in making budgetary requests, in obtaining desired legislation in Congress and in determining the foreign policy of the United States. Military strength grew so much following unification that Truman's successor, the most honored military officer of this century, took the occasion of his departure from the presidency to warn the nation against the dangers implicit in the power of the "military-industrial" complex.[174]

Although recognizing that he had not obtained the full, "true" unification desired, Truman was proud of what had been accomplished in that direction: "To me, the passage of the National Security Act and its strengthening

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[174]Time, XCIII (April 11, 1969), 22. The same issue also quotes retired Marine Commandant General David Shoup as charging that the officer corps' romanticizing of war, along with the influence of the "defense community," had led to the United States becoming a "militaristic and aggressive nation." See ibid., 20-21. The effort to provide an efficient military organization has obviously not been an unalloyed triumph. In mid-1970, a "Blue Ribbon Panel" reported the results of a year's study of the Defense Department to the President. The panel reported on numerous examples of gross inefficiency and recommended major reforms. Gilbert Fitzhugh, who headed the study, described the Pentagon as, ". . . just an amorphous lump with nobody in charge of anything." See ibid., XCVI (August 10, 1970), 8ff.

amendments represented one of the outstanding achievements of my administration."[175] Some time after his presidency, Truman was asked if the unification process should continue so that there could be an even-tighter amalgamation of the armed forces. He replied:

> There isn't a doubt in the world but that the whole thing ought to be tightened up so that the President, as commander-in-chief, could deal through a Secretary of Defense who should have direct control of the defenses of the nation. . . . We need to get the idea over that the Defense Department of the Government of the United States is of vital importance and must not be tampered with by conflicting forces. It ought to operate under direct control of a man who knows where he's going and why. He should be the Secretary of Defense in complete control of all the services, ground, sea and air, under the direction of the Commander-in-Chief--the President of the United States.[176]

The prevailing racial attitudes in the United States were traditionally mirrored by the military services. Until the manpower demands of World War II made necessary the calling of men regardless of color, the services had enlisted a limited number of Negroes. Those that were accepted were assigned to the more menial ratings and found themselves segregated from Caucasian servicemen. According to a War Department public statement in October 1940, separation of the races had proven

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[175]Truman, Memoirs, II, 53.

[176]Truman, Mr. Citizen, 145-46.

"satisfactory over a long period of years"; any change might hamper national defense preparations and be detrimental to morale.[177] The Navy Department was blunter: "The policy of not enlisting men of the colored race for any branch of the naval service but the messman's branch was adopted to meet the best interests of general ship efficiency."[178] During the war, although the number of black persons in all of the services increased, they were normally assigned to all-Negro units. These units were often given insignificant duties or ignored altogether. An example of this attitude was the experience of several Negro air units which were in training for well over a year; they were not considered for combat service until

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[177]E. W. Kenworthy, "Taps for Jim Crow in the Services," New York Times Magazine (June 11, 1950), 12. Hereinafter cited as Kenworthy, "Taps for Jim Crow in the Services." Kenworthy served as executive secretary on the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Forces. See also, Richard M. Dalfiume, Desegregation of the U.S.Armed Forces: Fighting on Two Fronts, 1939-1953 (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1969), 38-39. Hereinafter cited as Dalfiume, Desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces. For a thorough, but generally uncritical study of the Negro soldier in World War II, see Ulysses Lee, The Employment of Negro Troops, in Stetson Conn (genl. ed.), United States Army in World War II (Washington, 1966).

[178]Kenworthy, "Taps for Jim Crow in the Services," 12. See also, Jean Byers, "A Study of the Negro in Military Service," (263-page, mimeographed, restricted document, "reproduced for departmental use," January, 1950), 1. Copy in RG340, S/AF, Special Interest File, 1948-1949, National Archives. Hereinafter cited as Byers, "A Study of the Negro in Military Serivce."

black Congressmen began to apply pressure. At the request of the War Department, General MacArthur ". . . agreed to take a composite group of two medium bombardment and one P-47 fighter squadron, provided we assure him it is properly trained, and well organized and led. . . ."[179]

Improvement in the postwar period was slight. The Navy had begun integrating Negroes into numerous branches and departments during the war and in February 1946 lifted all racial restrictions as to the assignments of Negro personnel. But the implementation of this non-discriminatory policy was very slow. The great majority of enlisted blacks continued to serve as messmen, and there were only two Negro officers in the entire Navy in April of 1946. In early 1947 the Marines gave every enlisted Negro the option of transferring to the steward's branch or being discharged from the Corps. Army integration in the postwar period existed almost exclusively as a recommendation on paper.[180]

On December 5, 1946, by Executive Order 9808, Truman created the President's Committee on Civil Rights with instructions to investigate and make recommendations

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[179]Ira Eaker to Joseph T. McNarney, June 2, 1945, RG118, AAF, 312.1 - Operations ltrs. - 1945 (v. 3), National Archives.

[180]Byers, "A Study of the Negro in Military Service," 262-63. Copy in RG340, S/AF, Special Interest File, 1948-1949, National Archives.

to him on all areas of religious and racial discrimination in the United States.[181] The committee took the President at his word. The report to Truman, entitled "To Secure These Rights" was submitted in October, 1947. The report was a stinging condemnation of bias in America; it made numerous recommendations with regard to voting rights, anti-lynch laws, fair employment practices for federal employees, naturalization procedures and discrimination in the armed forces. One writer has called the committee's report, ". . . one of the great documents in the tradition of our free society."[182]

To implement the report, the President sent a special message to Congress, February 2, 1948. In it, Truman went right down the line in asking for legislation suggested in the committee's ten basic recommendations. He also announced that he had already taken steps (for which he did not need legislative sanction): He had created the Civil Rights Division within the Department of Justice, ordering the FBI to closely assist the new

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[181]Truman, Memoirs, II, 180. See also, Item No. 9, Remarks to Members of the President's Committee on Civil Rights, January 15, 1947, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1947, 98-99.

[182]John P. Roche, The Quest for the Dream: The Development of Civil Rights and Human Relations in Modern America (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1968), 238. See also, Dalfiume, Desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces, 155-56; Truman, Memoirs, II, 181. For Truman's message praising the report see Item No. 215, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1947, 479-80.

division. Truman also informed the Congress that he had ". . . instructed the Secretary of Defense to take steps to have the remaining instances of discrimination in the armed services eliminated as rapidly as possible."[183] As he might have expected, the Congress took no action.

Political controversy clouded the civil rights question. In May 1948 Truman's request for Selective Service legislation faced opposition from southern Democrats because of his order to Forrestal to eliminate discrimination in the military forces. But Truman told reporters that his order to the Secretary of Defense remained unchanged.[184] Political considerations did cause Truman to postpone executive action to end racial discrimination in federal agencies and in the military departments. A Washington correspondent reported that on the advice of J. Howard McGrath, Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, Truman had decided to delay any action until after he had received the presidential

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[183]Item No. 20, Special Message to the Congress on Civil Rights, February 2, 1948, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1948, 121-26.

[184]New York Times, May 28, 1948. Forrestal, who believed completely in the idea, had begun work upon receipt of the President's orders. See, for example, his interim progress report in a memorandum, Forrestal to Truman, February 29, 1948, RG330, OSD, CD25-1-11, National Archives.

nomination of his party.[185]

Ten days after winning the nomination, Truman issued two Presidential decrees. The first, Executive Order 9980, established fair employment policies for all departments of the executive branch of the national government. The second, Executive Order 9981, was the pivotal step in reforming the racial policies of the American military. The major provisions of the order are quoted below:

> WHEREAS it is essential that there be maintained in the armed services of the United States the highest standards of democracy, with equality of treatment and opportunity for all those who serve in our country's defense:
>
> NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States . . . and as Commander in Chief of the armed services, it is hereby ordered as follows:
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> 1. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the President that there shall be equality of treament and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin. This policy shall be put into effect as rapidly as possible, having due regard to the time required to effectuate any necessary changes without impairing efficiency or morale.
>
> 2. There shall be created in the National Military Establishment an advisory committee to be known as the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services, which shall be composed of seven members to be designated by the President.
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> 3. The Committee is authorized on behalf of the President to examine into the rules, procedures, and

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[185]James A. Wechsler, New York Post, June 6, 1948.

> practices of the armed services in order to determine in what respect such rules, procedures and practices may be altered or improved with a view to carrying out the policy of this order.[186]

Prodded by the Secretary of Defense and the President's Committee, the military departments began to initiate new policies designed to end discrimination. The Army and Navy were relatively slow in implementing these policies, while the Air Force set the pace under the leadership of Stuart Symington. The relative slowness of change in the Navy Department would appear to come from an inherent traditionalism which was slow to accept change, rather than any general desire to subvert Truman's orders. The Army, however, was not encouraged to move toward desegregation by the attitude of Secretary Royall. In April 1948 Forrestal had assembled a conference of fifteen Negro leaders to get their views on how best to

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[186]Executive Order 9981, July 26, 1948 (13 F.R., 4314). Text of both orders is in Joint Army and Air Force Bulletin, No. 32 (August 2, 1948). See also, Richard J. Stillman, Integration of the Negro in the U.S. Armed Forces (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), 41-42. Hereinafter cited as Stillman, Integration of the Negro in the U.S. Armed Forces. Original draft is in Clifford Papers, Subject File, Segregation in the Armed Forces, Truman Library. The original idea for the committee was Clark Clifford's: "I would suggest . . . a defense establishment board . . . charged with the development of a uniform racial policy in the Services consistent with the President's two goals of equal opportunity and non-discrimination." Clifford to Truman, May 11, 1948, Clifford Papers, Subject File, Segregation in the Armed Forces, Truman Library. Clifford repeated this proposal in a memorandum to Secretary Forrestal, May 13, 1948, Clifford Papers, Subject File, Unification: Secretary of Defense, Truman Library.

improve race relations in the military. During the meeting Royall held firm to the Army policy of keeping black soldiers in segregated units. Royall told the conferees that this segregation did not represent discrimination.[187] In a bitter memorandum to the Secretary of Defense several months later, Royall complained that the Army was taking an unfair "rap" from ". . . the Negro and the liberal press in the matter of race relations." The Army Secretary recognized that the attacks stemmed from his remarks at the April meeting, but he told Forrestal that since neither the President nor the Secretary of Defense had disapproved of the Army policy, Forrestal should now publicly endorse it. If not, Royall continued, he would feel it necessary to make public ". . . the facts showing the tacit approval of the Army's position and demonstrating the fact that our own treatment of the Negro is equal to that of the Air Force and superior to that of the Navy."[188]

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[187] New York Times, April 27, 1948; Baltimore Sun, April 27, 1948. See also, Dalfiume, Desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces, 165-66; Stillman, Integration of the Negro in the U.S. Armed Forces, 40; Barton J. Bernstein, "The Ambiguous Legacy: The Truman Administration and Civil Rights," in Bernstein (ed.), Politics and Policies of the Truman Administration (Chicago: Quandrangle Books, 1970), 286-87. Hereinafter cited as Bernstein, "The Ambiguous Legacy."

[188] Royall to Forrestal, September 22, 1948, RG330, OSD, CD30-1-2, National Archives.

Despite Royall's comments, it seems clear that the Air Force had adopted a much more enlightened policy. In January 1949 Symington approved an Air Force policy that, except for allowing the continuation of a few all-Negro units, proposed a complete end to any racial reference as a factor in determining personnel policies.[189] One other qualification was made in a memorandum to commanding officers describing implementation of the order: "Care should be taken to insure that a reasonably small number of Negro personnel is assigned to any individual white organization."[190] Symington was clearly in earnest when he told the Secretary of Defense and later the President that he planned ". . . to completely eliminate segregation in the Air Force."[191]

Louis Johnson, who replaced Forrestal as Secretary

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[189]Eugene M. Zuckert to Symington, January 12, 1949, RG340, S/AF, Special Interest File, 35-Staff, National Archives. The original draft of Symington's order to all commanding officers is in RG340, S/AF, Special Interest File (35), Negro Affairs--1949, National Archives.

[190]R. E. Nugent to Symington, et. al., January 3, 1949, RG340, S/AF, Special Interest File, 35-Staff, National Archives.

[191]"Meeting of the President and the Four Service Secretaries with the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services, 12:15 P.M., 12 January, 1949, Cabinet Room, White House," in RG330, OSD, D54-1-16, National Archives. See also, Symington to Forrestal, January 6, 1949, RG330, OSD, CD30-1-2, National Archives.

of Defense at the end of March, issued a directive to the service secretaries in early April, 1949, establishing "supplemental policies" to Truman's Executive Order 9981. Johnson insisted that there must be uniform application of the racial equality policy throughout the armed services.[192] The substance and some of the language of the Johnson directive were quite similar to the statement of policy that Symington had proposed for the Air Force in January.

The final report of the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services, entitled "Freedom to Serve," was submitted to Truman on May 22, 1950. The Committee was able to report that significant strides had been made. The Navy had eliminated all vestiges of segregation and opened all jobs, ratings and technical schools without regard to race. The Marine Corps had eliminated segregation in basic training, but still assigned some black Marines to all-Negro units. The Air Force had established its

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[192]Johnson to Secretaries of Army, Navy, Air Force and Chairman, Personnel Policy Board, April 6, 1949, RG330, OSD, SD291.2--Negroes, National Archives. For the Secretary of Defense's explanation of the need for his servicewide directive of April 6, see letter, Louis Johnson to Lyndon B. Johnson, July 8, 1949, RG330, OSD, D54-1-6, National Archives. Secretary of the Army Royall resigned effective April 27. See Truman to Royall, April 21, 1949, Truman Papers, OF, 1285-B, Department of the Army (1949), Truman Library.

policy of equality in the spring of 1949 and at the time of the report was proceeding with the phasing-out of the few segregated units remaining. By January 1950 the Army had removed racial restrictions from all jobs and technical schools and discontinued the practice of assigning Negroes to overhead (housekeeping) units. An Army policy change of March 27, 1950, ended the ten per-cent limit on Negro strength in the Army and the racial quotas on enlistments were discontinued.[193] The Korean War began soon after the report was submitted to Truman. During the course of the Korean emergency, the military services, particularly the Army, were able to eliminate the majority of segregated units and discriminatory

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[193]Excerpts from the key portions of the report are, Item No. 121, Freedom to Serve: Report of the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services, in Leslie H. Fishel, Jr. and Benjamin Quarles (eds.), The Black American: A Brief Documentary History (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1970), 312-14. See also, Dalfiume, Desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces, 198-200; Kenworthy, "Taps for Jim Crow in the Services," 24. There is some evidence that Truman had to intervene directly with Gordon Gray, then Secretary of the Army, to have the racial quotas dropped. See Gray to Truman. March 1, 1950, Truman Papers, OF, 1285B, Department of the Army, Truman Library. Gray to Truman, March 11, 1950, ibid. Truman to Gray, March 27, 1950, RG335, Office of the Secretary of theArmy (OSA), 291.2, National Archives.

practices.[194]

Although Truman was frustrated by the Congress in his efforts to guarantee the civil rights of all American citizens, his success in eliminating racial bias in the military service has earned him a permanent status among the courageous few who championed civil rights when it was not yet a popular cause. The example set by the military establishment in eliminating de jure and de facto bias gave an immeasurable, but undoubtedly strong, impetus to the civil rights movement in the civilian community. If America can one day stand free at last of racial bigotry it can well reflect that Harry Truman's desegregation of the armed forces was an important early step on the road to that utopia.

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[194]For example, in July, 1951, General Marshall, then Secretary of Defense, was able to tell two Senators who inquired that racially-segregated units had been almost totally eliminated in the Far Eastern Command (Korea and Japan) and that progress was being made in other areas, ". . . to carry forward the principle of integration in a planned and orderly manner." Marshall to Herbert H. Lehman and Hubert H. Humphrey, July 20, 1951, RG330, OSD, SD291.2, National Archives. General Matthew B. Ridgway recommended and was very active in bringing about the integration of the units in his Far Eastern Command. See Walter G. Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front in Stetson Conn (genl. ed), United States Army in the Korean War (Washington, 1966), 104-105. See also, Dalfiume, Desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces, 210-11; Bernstein, "The Ambiguous Legacy," 297-98.

# CHAPTER VI

## THE COLD WAR YEARS

> We must not at any time falter in maintaining our strong position, no matter what it costs, since we are the principal discouraging force to Communist imperialism--and to war.[1]

The most immediate military problem facing Truman at the end of the Second World War was demobilization. At war's end the United States faced the problem of an orderly disassemblage of the mightiest war machine the world had ever known. There were over twelve million men and women in uniform in mid-1945 and over seven million were stationed outside of the United States.[2] Planning for the eventual release of these personnel began during the war, and, in September 1944 the War Department announced that releases would be by a point system on an individual basis. A serviceman accumulated points for length of service, number of children, overseas service

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[1]Truman, Mr. Citizen, 204.

[2]R. Alton Lee, "The Army 'Mutiny' of 1946," Journal of American History, LIII, No. 3 (December 1966), 557. Hereinafter cited as Lee, "The Army 'Mutiny' of 1946." See also, Rostow, United States in the World Arena, 265.

and combat experience, as well as a set scale of points for various military decorations.[3]

Military planning, which had the President's approval, provided for an orderly, gradual demobilization of forces. The postwar Army strength was set at one and a half million; the Navy expected a six hundred thousand man force; and the Army Air Force was hopeful of becoming a separate service with about four hundred thousand members.[4] Truman and the military planners were to find that their orderly demobilization schedules would become irrelevant in the face of concerted pressure for the immediate release of all servicemen. As Truman recalled, "With the end of hostilities in the Pacific, the public demand for the discharge of the millions of men in the service became insistent."[5] Truman told an August 23 press conference that talks with his military leaders had led him to the conclusion that the armed services were doing all that they possibly could to expedite the demobilization process.[6]

In his special message to Congress on September 6,

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[3]Truman, Memoirs, I, 506; Lee, "The Army 'Mutiny' of 1946," 556.

[4]American Military History, 530.

[5]Truman, Memoirs, I, 506.

[6]Item No. 107, Press Conference, August 23, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 233.

1945, the President asked Congress to continue conscription, since enlistments would not fill the anticipated gap created by discharging those who served during the war. Truman told Congress that to suspend inductions now would be "an unforgivable discrimination . . . requiring continued sacrifice from those who have already done their part."[7] The President already knew that retention of some veterans was inevitable. He gave some indication of that in his message, since he asked for continuation of the war powers granted to the executive branch and he asked the Congress not to pass a resolution declaring that the war had ended. The war statute declared that those inducted could not be retained beyond six months of the war's termination.[8]

What Truman was trying to make clear in his several statements on demobilization was that the postwar military

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[7]Item No. 128, Special Message to the Congress Presenting a 21-Point Program for the Reconversion Period, September 6, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 288.

[8]Ibid., 277-78, 288-89. In a letter on August 23, 1945, to Senator Elbert Thomas, Chairman of the Military Affairs Committee, Truman said that the necessary force levels could not be attained by enlistments and induction alone and that some World War II veterans would have to be retained in the service. Quoted in Lee, "The Army 'Mutiny' of 1946," 557. The portion of Truman's message to Congress dealing with selective service and retention of veterans, as well as the letter to Senator Thomas, were drafted by General Marshall, then Army Chief of Staff. See Marshall to Truman, August 23, 1945, Rosenman Papers, Subject File, Message to Congress, Truman Library.

posture of the United States was to be far different from our past experience. The President envisioned a new military and foreign policy that rejected traditional isolationism and projected the United States into the role of defender of the peace. "We are committed now," Truman told Congress, "to an armed occupation of the lands of our defeated enemies. . . . To meet these . . . obligations will require the maintenance for some time of a real measure of our present land, sea, and air power."[9] Much of what Truman said with regard to the postwar military reflected the views of General Marshall. For example, in the biennial report which Marshall had made to the President in June of 1945, he had written:

> We finish each bloody war with a feeling of acute revulsion against this savage form of human behavior, and yet on each occasion we confuse military preparedness with the causes of war and then drift almost deliberately into another catastrophe. . . . We have ignored the hard realities of world affairs. We have been purely idealistic.
> . . . until . . . a solution is found to prevent wars, a rich nation which lays down its arms as we have done after every war in our history, will court disaster. The existence of the complex and fearful instruments of destruction now available make this a simple truth which is, in my opinion, undebatable.[10]

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[9]Item No. 128, Special Message to the Congress Presenting a 21-Point Program for the Reconversion Period, September 6, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 288.

[10]"For the Common Defense: Biennial Report of the Chief of Staff, July 1, 1943 to June 30, 1945," quoted in Millis (ed.), American Military Thought, 436-37.

Global military policy did not concern the servicemen who, having fought the good fight, wanted to return to their homes and families. Neither they nor their relatives and congressmen could understand why the mustering-out process should take so long. As the clamor rose, Truman tried to stem it with a statement issued on September 19, telling the nation that the Army assured him they would have two million out before Christmas and that there was no "padding" of the size of the postwar forces. The country would maintain only those numbers necessary to meet "national commitments"; he had ordered that all other military personnel be discharged as rapidly as possible.[11]

The original form of protest to the pace of demobilization was a letter-writing campaign directed at Congress by parents and wives of servicemen, and, eventually, letters from the servicemen themselves. The letters were followed by petitions and cables to the President and the Congress. The Army responded by reducing the total points required for discharge eligibility some five times in the closing months of 1945. This rapid reduction in requirements overtaxed the available transport, which the Navy tried partially to offset by

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[11]Item No. 138, Statement by the President Concerning Demobilization of the Armed Forces, September 19, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 327-28; Truman, Memoirs, I, 507-508.

temporarily converting over forty cruisers, battleships and carriers into troop transports. Demobilization succeeded to the extent that a War Department announcement in early 1946 stated that inductions were not high enough to meet overseas troop requirements, so that the one and a half million servicemen then eligible for discharge would be released gradually over a six-month period, rather than the planned three month span.[12]

The resentment and frustration which had been accumulating among troops idled by victory six months and more was ignited by the War Department announcement. The protests now took the form of non-violent mass marches and demonstrations, the first by 20,000 soldiers in Manila on January 6. Similar protests occurred in France, England, Guam, China, Japan, Germany, Hawaii, Austria, India and the United States.[13] Two days after the initial mass demonstration at Manila, the White House released a Presidential statement on demobilization. In the message Truman said that in consideration of the shipping involved, as well as the clerical mountains that had to be moved, the processing was going as fast as possible. About

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[12]Lee, "The Army 'Mutiny' of 1946," 558-61; American Military History, 530.

[13]Lee, "The Army 'Mutiny' of 1946," 562-63; American Military History, 530.

eight and one-half million had been separated from the service in the months since the fighting ended in Europe.

> Already the critical need for troops overseas has begun to slow down the Army's rate of demobilization. This is not an arbitrary action on the part of the Army. . . .
>
> To satisfy myself that demobilization is being carried out with all possible speed, I have reviewed once more the Army and Navy procedures. I am convinced, as every other American who examines the record must be, that the services are carrying out demobilization with commendable efficiency and with justice to all concerned.[14]

Patterson and Forrestal had met with Truman on October 26, 1945, and warned him that the continuous acceleration of the demobilization process was endangering the strategic military posture of the United States in its world-wide commitments. Truman was of a like mind: "I agreed entirely with this view and stated at that meeting that . . . the program we were following was no longer demobilization--it was disintegration of our armed forces."[15] Thus while privately recognizing that the system was chaotic, Truman allowed it to continue because of political pressure and publicly praised demobilization's

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[14]Item No. 8, Statement by the President on Demobilization, January 8, 1946, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1946, 15.

[15]Truman, Memoirs, I, 509. There is ample evidence that both the President and the military agreed as to the dire effects of the program. For example, Eisenhower could write to the President about the "demoralization" of the "entire Army" that was brought about by the "drastic demobilization program." Letter, Eisenhower to Truman, January 30, 1946, RG407, OSW, AG370.01, National Archives.

"commendable efficiency." It is upon such rocks that the credibility of presidential statements run aground.

The demobilization process--which, combining Truman's public and private utterances, could be styled "efficient disintegration"--continued throughout 1946 and into 1947. By June 30, 1947, there were just over a million and a half under arms. The Army ground forces numbered just under seven hundred thousand. For this same date, the Army had projected a two million-man force, but the pressure for accelerated demobilization, budget cuts by Truman and further cuts by Congress, had altered these plans. By July, 1946, Army Chief of Staff Eisenhower was vainly hopeful of getting a ceiling of 1,070,000 officers and men.[16] An Army spokesman said that of these numbers, only about two and one-third divisions were available for immediate deployment in a national security emergency. By mid-1947, the American Army ranked sixth in size among the nations of the world.[17]

Numerous factors were converging in the early post-war period, and these in their own mass and momentum changed American strategic thinking. The rapid demobilization, combined with a traditional American distaste for

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[16]Letter, Eisenhower to Matthew J. Connelly, July 27, 1946, Eisenhower Papers, PF/DDE, Truman folder (1), Eisenhower Library.

[17]Osgood, Limited War, 154.

a large standing armed force, the defeat of Truman's universal training proposal and the forced budgetary economies sharply reduced the size of the military establishment. Roughly half of the forces-in-being were employed as policemen, i.e., enforcing occupation policies in Germany, Japan and Korea. With the portents of war with the Soviet Union an increasingly insistent theme of the early Cold War years, the United States was impelled to prepare for war in time of peace for the first time in its history. The final factor in the evolving equation was the existence of nuclear weapons.

These imperatives brought to the forefront a growing reliance on a strategic air force armed with atomic bombs. The concept of employing conventional, ready forces as a deterrent to aggression received lip-service, but was gradually losing out to the "air-atomic reaction" school of thought. This type of planning did not prepare the United States for the conventional, limited warfare that it eventually became involved with in Korea and IndoChina.[18]

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[18] Ibid. See also, O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 30-31; Millis, Arms and Men, 273; American Military History, 540; David S. McLellan and John W. Reuss, "Foreign and Military Policies," in Richard S. Kirkendall (ed.), The Truman Period as a Research Field (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1967), 76-77. Hereinafter cited as McLellan and Reuss, "Foreign and Military Policies." It is well to note here, that while the armed services were reduced to levels well

Truman came to the presidency convinced from his Truman Committee experience that the military services had ". . . unquestionably squandered billions of dollars."[19] In planning for the 1946 budget during the closing days of World War II, Truman developed a "remainder method" of determining military allocations; he would continue to employ this standard until the advent of the Korean War. The method involved subtracting all anticipated expenditures of the civilian government from anticipated revenues, the remainder determining the dollar ceiling on military appropriations.[20]

The Navy fought hardest against the cancellation of shipbuilding contracts and the reduced spending levels in the postwar budget. Truman had cut back on all ship construction that was less than fifty percent completed. Forrestal struggled with the President, in the first of

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below those desired by Truman and the military, this still left the United States with the largest peacetime military establishment in its history. By 1947, one-third of the total national budget was being appropriated to the military. Ekirch, Civilian and the Military, 273.

[19]Quoted in a diary entry, June 5, 1945, Smith Papers, Diary, copy in the Truman Library of the original in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library. In a similar vein, Truman wrote: "I knew . . . that Army and Navy professionals seldom had any idea of the value of money. They did not seem to care what the cost was. . . ." Memoirs, I, 88.

[20]American Military History, 530-31. The Eightieth Congress, which convened in January, 1947, with both houses dominated by the Republicans, will force much greater economies on the military than Truman ever had.

several appropriations fights, to reinstate five heavy cruisers to the Navy.[21] The Navy, as well as the other services, found that Truman was very difficult to move on budget questions. He told the Budget Director in February 1946, in the midst of a naval personnel dispute, that his instructions were to hold the budget line.[22] Forrestal told the President in August that it would jeopardize the security of the nation to meet the budget reductions he had ordered for the Navy.[23] In a very crisp reply, the President instructed the Secretary of the Navy to reduce naval expenditures to the levels called for. He also informed Forrestal that in the future he wanted a monthly report submitted to him through the Bureau of the Budget, detailing actual and projected expenditures of the Navy Department.[24] Truman wrote in his Memoirs that he found that the military always made excessive budgetary demands, ". . . but the Navy was the

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[21]Forrestal to Truman, November 2, 1945, Historical Records Division, Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), (SC)A4-1 (11), Navy Yard.

[22]Diary Entries, September 13, 1945, February 18, 1946, Smith Papers, Diary, copy in the Truman Library of the original in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.

[23]Forrestal to Truman, August 21, 1946, Historical Records Division, CNO, (SC) L1-1, Navy Yard.

[24]Truman to Forrestal, October 9, 1946, ibid.

worst offender."[25] However, the most extensive and acrimonious dispute over the military budget arose out of the Air Force's demand for seventy air groups.

Because of rapid developments in civilian and military aviation which dated most aviation policy and procedures, Truman appointed a temporary "Air Policy Commission" in July 1947. He charged the commission, chaired by Thomas K. Finletter, with the task of making an objective analysis of national aviation problems and submitting recommendations to him on an integrated national aviation policy.[26] At the same time a similar review was being carried out by the Joint Congressional Aviation Policy Board. Upon completion, the studies were found to be in agreement on one important military recommendation: the establishment of seventy regular air groups

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[25]Truman, Memoirs, II, 34. In Chapter 3 (Vol. II), from which this citation is taken, Truman presents a detailed explanation of his budgetary methods and philosophy.

[26]Item No. 148, Letter Appointing Members of Air Policy Committee, July 18, 1947, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1947, 344-45. An "air group," as defined by General Vandenberg, was structured similarly to an Army division. There were groups of fighter aircraft (seventy-five per group), and of light, medium, and heavy (or, long-range) bombers, with fifty, thirty-six, and thirty planes per group, respectively. Vandenberg testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1427.

within the Air Force.[27] However, in his budget message to Congress on January 12, 1948, the President said, "The plans for the Air Force contemplate operation of 55 combat groups. . . ."[28] Although Truman had received the Finletter Commission report twelve days earlier, he released it on the 13th, the day after the budget message was transmitted to Congress recommending 55 air groups.[29]

The Air Force had apparently set a seventy air group goal for itself late in 1945. How they arrived at that precise figure has never been made clear. Walter Millis has made the credible suggestion that it was probably based ". . . more on a deduction as to what the taxpayer would stand for and the air industry could reasonably supply than on a calculation of the probable military requirements."[30] For the next four years and more the Air Force's spokesmen would argue that the seventy air groups they were proposing represented an irreducible

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[27]Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 473; Rogow, Victim of Duty, 254. The Congressional Aviation Policy Board (known also as the Brewster-Hinshaw Board), submitted its report to Congress on March 1, 1948.

[28]Item No. 5, Annual Budget Message to the Congress, Fiscal Year 1949, January 12, 1948, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1948, 27-28.

[29]Item No. 7, Statement by the President Upon Making Public the Report of the Air Policy Commission, January 13, 1948, ibid., 61.

[30]Millis, Arms and Men, 277.

minimum. As Air Secretary Symington wrote in December, 1947, "The Air Force has consistently advocated its 70 Group Program as the minimum force adequate to the requirements imposed by the position of the United States in the modern world."[31] But with the fluid military situation in the period 1945-1950 and the technological advancements in nuclear weaponry and jet propulsion, the consistent advocacy of seventy groups had more of a symbolic than specific meaning.[32]

Secretary Symington, who saw the budget message before it was sent to Congress, informed Forrestal and White House aide Clifford that he was going to protest over the Secretary of Defense's head. He did so in a letter to James Webb, Director of the Bureau of the Budget, on December 16, 1947. Symington warned of the grave implications that would result from not meeting the Air Force seventy group proposal.[33] While the Secretary of the Air Force was really attacking the budget that Truman wanted and had approved, he ended up in a public

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[31]Symington to James E. Webb, December 16, 1947, Clifford Papers, Subject File, National Military Establishment: Air Force, Truman Library.

[32]Hammond, "Super Carriers and B-36 Bombers," 471; Millis, Arms and Men, 276-77.

[33]Symington to Forrestal, Symington to Clifford, Symington to Webb, (all) December 16, 1947, Clifford Papers, Subject File, National Military Establishment: Air Force, Truman Library.

fight with Forrestal, who, while opposed to the low ceilings himself, was obliged to defend them as Secretary of Defense.

The issue came to a head late in March 1948 with Forrestal's testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee in support of supplemental appropriations necessary for the rearmament requested by Truman in a special message on March 17. The Secretary, who was cognizant of Congressional sympathy for the seventy-group Air Force, expressed agreement in principle with the concept of a powerful air arm. But, Forrestal said, Air Force requirements had to be obtained within the framework of a balanced military force. As a compromise, Forrestal proposed a small supplemental appropriation of $775 million for aircraft procurement and research. He also asked for additional funds for increasing the size of the Army and Marine Corps. In all, his requests would add $3 billion to the President's budget proposal of $11 billion for defense in fiscal year 1949.[34] A few days

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[34]Forrestal's requests to the Armed Services Committee were based on figures worked out with Truman earlier and confirmed in a letter, Truman to Forrestal, March 26, 1948, Truman Papers, OF, 1285, Truman Library. See also, Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 400-401; Millis, Arms and Men, 286; Rogow, Victim of Duty, 256-57; Schilling, "Politics of National Defense," 40-41. Truman's March 17 message to Congress (noted earlier) emphasized a need for rearmament and aid to European nations, such as Finland, Greece, and Italy, threatened by

later, on April 2, Forrestal wrote a letter to Senator Gurney, Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, clarifying the remarks he had made in his testimony on the 25th of March. He explained to the Senator in convincing detail that the Air Force program, if approved and balanced out by concomitant increases in land, sea and merchant marine elements, would mean an increase of over $18 million in the total military budget annually.[35] To bolster his position that such an increase would be necessary if the seventy-group program were initiated, Forrestal ordered the Joint Chiefs of Staff to study and report the probable costs of a military establishment balanced around such an increment in the strength of the Air Force.[36]

While the crossfire continued in the press and

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Communist takeover. Czechoslovakia had already fallen to Communist pressure in February. Text of Truman's message is in Item No. 52, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1948, 182-86.

[35]Forrestal to Chan Gurney, April 2, 1948, RG340, S/AF, Reorganization of the National Military Establishment, Special File 4A, Roles and Missions--Correspondence, National Archives. In a Pentagon press release (OSD No. 44-48), Forrestal made his letter to Gurney public. Copy in Clifford Papers, Subject File, National Military Establishment: Air Force, Truman Library.

[36]Forrestal to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, March 27, 1948, RG340, S/AF, Reorganization of the National Military Establishment, Special File 4A, Roles and Missions--Correspondence, National Archives.

congressional hearings, the President kept silent. Forrestal was carrying the burden of defending a budget that was not his in any sense, but Truman's. Most of the fuel for the attacks was coming from Symington, who, like Forrestal, was obliged to support Truman's budget, but refused to do so. Symington told the Senate Armed Services Committee that expansion to seventy air groups had been his position for years and he did not propose to change it now. General Spaatz, Air Force Chief of Staff, added his testimony to Symington's; together they constituted a refutation of their nominal superior's testimony.[37] By this time, Forrestal must have been fully aware of his great error during the unification struggle in insisting that the Secretary of Defense be a powerless "coordinator" rather than a true executive officer.

Truman was unable to stifle Air Force resistance to the proposed budget and ended up making a deal. The JCS, which had reported to Forrestal that their review showed that a military establishment "balanced" against a seventy group Air Force would cost an additional nine billion dollars annually, agreed to back a $3.5 billion supplement instead. The Air Force agreed to support the request, since they would get sixty-six air groups and

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[37]Rogow, Victim of Duty, 258-59.

most of the additional appropriation.[38]

With Truman's approval Forrestal went back to Congress on April 21 with the compromise. Forrestal emphasized the unanimity of the President, the JCS and the Service Secretaries on this revised proposal.[39] However, Truman made a review of the supplemental request by the Bureau of the Budget a condition of his approval.

The President had apparently had his fill of opposition from his own military leadership to the Administration's budget. Shortly after Budget Director Webb and he agreed on the limits, Truman called for a White House session (May 13, 1948) with the Secretary of Defense, the Service Secretaries and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He began the meeting by reading to them a ten-page statement in which he explained that the Budget Bureau review was completed. The study had recommended a cut from the April compromise figure of $3.48 billion to $3.17 billion. Truman said he was willing to submit a request for $3.19 billion, a figure suggested by

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[38]Schilling, "Politics of National Defense," 43-44; Millis, Arms and Men, 287.

[39]New York Times, April 22, 1948. An excellent analysis of the controversy and an accurate prediction of the outcome are contained in an article by Hanson Baldwin, "Defense Plan Debate Reveals Sharp Conflict," ibid., April 25, 1948.

Forrestal, provided the Armed Forces did not try to spend it all. His reasons for this rather unique solution were described as "the uncertainty of world conditions" and "other factors." Truman also set a ceiling of $15 billion for the defense budget for fiscal years 1949 and 1950, explaining that to exceed it would drive the total national budget several billion dollars above anticipated revenues. He concluded with an emphatic warning to all present:

> Therefore, as Commander in Chief, I am issuing in writing instructions as outlined in the memoranda delivered to you today. I expect these orders to be carried out wholeheartedly, in good spirit, and without mental reservation.
>
> If anyone present has any questions or misgivings concerning the program I have outlined, make your views known now--for once this program goes forward officially, it will be the Administration program--and I expect every member of the Administration to support it fully, both in public and in private.
>
> The statement I have just read will form part of my record of this meeting. This paper will be on file for your examination.[40]

On the same date, Truman also sent a lengthy memorandum to Forrestal, reiterating much of what he had said in his statement.[41] His troubles, of course, were not

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[40]"Statement by the President to the Secretary of Defense, the Secretaries of the Three Departments, and the Three Chiefs of Staff," May 13, 1948, Papers of James E. Webb, "President" folder, Truman Library. Hereinafter cited as Webb Papers. See also, Schilling, "Politics of National Defense," 154-55; Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 435-39.

[41]Truman to Forrestal, May 13, 1948, Clifford Papers, Subject File, National Military Establishment--Miscellaneous, Truman Library.

with Forrestal. In fact, the statement Truman had read to the meeting had been drafted in the Pentagon by William McNeil, Forrestal's assistant, according to specifications provided by the President.[42] But Truman sent identical memoranda, attaching copies of his letter to Forrestal, to the Air Force, Army and Navy secretaries, the Army and Air Force Chiefs of Staff and the Chief of Naval Operations. In these memoranda, Truman informed the military leaders that he was sending them copies of his letter to the Secretary of Defense in order to eliminate any misunderstanding as to the policies he had approved:

> This means that everyone must make a conscious effort to subordinate personal and service preferences to the broader interests of the national program. Our several conferences have indicated that there are still some of you who are thinking more of representing the interests and objectives of your individual service than of interpreting the broad national program and its requirements to your subordinates and to the Congress.[43]

As the bill finally passed in April, it provided for a total defense budget for fiscal 1949 of $13.8 billion. Against the express wishes of Truman and Forrestal, the Congress voted an extra $822 million appropriation to bring the Air Force up to a full seventy air groups. The vote for the budget supplements in

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[42]Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 435.

[43]Truman to Air Force Chief of Staff, et. al., May 13, 1948, Truman Papers, OF, 1285, Truman Library.

Congress--which was understood to be an affirmation of the seventy group concept--was an overwhelming 343 - 3 in the House and 74 - 2 in the Senate.[44] The Air Force had clearly won out over the Secretary of Defense and the Commander in Chief. But it was a hollow victory. Truman signed the supplemental appropriation act, but, as promised, refused to spend the extra funds voted by Congress. The Air Force was allowed only fifty-nine air groups by Truman for fiscal year 1949.[45] Most of the Congress and a majority of the public were convinced that "the next war would be fought in the air," but the Commander in Chief seemed more inclined to Forrestal's "balanced forces" concept, although more for fiscal than strategic reasons. Truman later discussed the controversy with journalist Arthur Krock:

> He explained that his reasons for limiting the new air-combat groups below the point desired by . . . Symington and the Air Force generals was "we are on the verge of an aviation discovery that will make

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[44]Schilling, "Politics of National Defense," 44-46. See also, Rogow, Victim of Duty, 265.

[45]New York Times, May 22, 1948. See also, Item No. 106, Statement by the President Upon Signing Bill Providing Funds for Military Aircraft, May 21, 1948, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1948, 272; Millis, Arms and Men, 287; Schilling, "Politics of National Defense," 46-47. In a letter dated June 3, 1948, the President set the maximum troop strengths for all services and stipulated the active aircraft inventory for the Navy and Air Force at 6000 and 9240, respectively. See Truman to Forrestal, June 3, 1948, RG330, OSD, CD9-2-4, National Archives.

> obsolete everything now being manufactured." (Evidently, new big bombers.) His plan, as he described it, was also to maintain flexibility in aviation production so that it could be stepped up when desired, and planning altered, "as we did during the Second World War."[46]

The President's decision to freeze appropriated Air Force funds was repeated in the next budget.[47] Truman's action represented a new dimension of the commander in chief function. The Congress, which exercises a constitutional check on the executive powers through its annual appropriations for the budget, now found that it could not force the President to increase the size of the military establishment against his will. And the ability of Congress to argue against any requested increase was hampered by a lack of information and military intelligence which, by the terms of the National Security Act (1947) they were not privy to, except at the discretion of the President.

One more serious struggle erupted within the Defense Department which eventually required presidential intervention. The Navy had received authorization in the

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[46]Krock, Memoirs, 241.

[47]Discussing the budget for fiscal year 1950 in a press conference, Truman said of the Air Force: "You never can satisfy them. I have to put my foot down and tell them what they can have. If you didn't do that they would take all the money in the budget." Item No. 7, Press Conference on the Budget, January 8, 1949, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1949, 34.

fiscal 1949 budget to construct a prototype, flush-deck aircraft carrier, on condition that it halt construction on thirteen smaller vessels then under construction. While this was a heavy price to pay, the Navy agreed, since such a carrier would be capable of participating in strategic atomic warfare. At the time, the Air Force objected strenuously, but to no avail, since Forrestal considered the project sound. However, Louis Johnson, Forrestal's successor as Secretary of Defense, was determined to cut defense spending.[48]

On April 23, 1949, five days after the keel of the carrier had been laid, Johnson ordered the construction to halt. In his decision the Secretary of Defense was backed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Admiral Denfield, dissenting) and the President.[49] John L. Sullivan, Secretary of the Navy, who had not been consulted on this decision and was in Texas when Johnson made his announcement, immediately informed Johnson that under provision of Section 202 of the National Security Act of 1947, he was exercising his right to appeal the decision directly to the Commander in Chief.[50] However, Truman decided

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[48]Hammond, "Super Carriers and B-36 Bombers," 470-71.

[49]Louis Johnson to Sullivan, April 23, 1949, RG330, OSD, D16-2-44, National Archives.

[50]Sullivan to Johnson, April 24, 1949, ibid.

against Sullivan.

The Navy Secretary resigned on April 26, but not before delivering a bitter attack on the Secretary of Defense. In a letter to Johnson, Sullivan accused the Secretary of killing the one weapon upon which the Navy placed the highest priority without even the courtesy of consulting with the Chief of Naval Operations or the Secretary of the Navy. Sullivan was "very deeply disturbed" by this unprecedented action blocking the development of a new, powerful weapon, he told Johnson. He also added his conviction that ". . . this will result in a renewed effort to abolish the Marine Corps and to transfer all Naval and Marine Aviation elsewhere. . . ."[51] The Navy Secretary talked with Truman on April 25 and the President agreed to make Sullivan's letter to the Secretary of Defense public. Sullivan apparently felt no ill will toward the President over cancellation of the carrier, since his letter of resignation was quite friendly, as was Truman's acceptance.[52]

Secretary Sullivan's fears for the future of the

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[51]Sullivan to Johnson, April 26, 1949, Truman Papers, OF, 1285C, Truman Library.

[52]Sullivan to Truman, July 26, 1949, ibid.; Truman to Sullivan, July 26, 1949, ibid. See also, Hammond, "Super Carriers and B-36 Bombers," 495; Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 471; Truman, Memoirs, II, 53.

Marine Corps and Naval Aviation were a surface indication of deep-seated interservice bickering that had not ended with unification. The Navy was particularly resentful of the growing power of the Air Force. Not only had the romantic and heroic legend of the grizzled seadog been replaced in the public mind by the glamorous image of a dashing jet pilot, but the Navy's prestigious role as the first line of the nation's defense had also been lost to the continent-spanning, nuclear weapons delivery vehicle, the B-36 bomber. Soon after cancelling the Navy's super-carrier, Secretary of Defense Johnson, who was emerging as a strong advocate of strategic air power, allowed the Air Force to order seventy-five additional B-36's. The result was a rebellion within the Navy Department called the "Revolt of the Admirals."[53]

Charging corruption and favoritism in the B-36 contract awards, a Representative from Pennsylvania, James E. VanZandt, demanded an investigation.[54] The resulting Congressional hearings before the House Armed

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[53]Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 473. See also, Feis, Between War and Peace, 291, 337.

[54]A summation of the charges made by Van Zandt and Symington's seventy-nine page rebuttal statement are both attached to a memorandum, Glenn W. Martin to Clifford, July 22, 1949, Clifford Papers, Subject File, National Military Establishment--B-36 Investigation, Truman Library. The source of Van Zandt's generally unsubstantiated charges was an anonymous civilian employee in the Navy Department.

Services Committee constituted a complete examination of the national military posture, for it broadened into an inquiry on unification, military strategy, the B-36 and other matters. During the course of the hearings, a host of high-ranking Navy and Marine officers attacked the prevailing Air Force policy of long-distance, nuclear air-borne retaliation as dangerous, deceptive and not based on sound military principles. One of the charges made by the admirals was that massive nuclear retaliation was immoral and that the Navy was better able to deliver massive air strikes against the heartland of Russia. Admiral Louis E. Denfeld, Chief of Naval Operations, summarized the Navy's position in an attack leveled principally at the Secretary of Defense. Denfeld accused Johnson of violating the spirit of unification, criticized him for canceling the super-carrier and said that "uninformed and arbitrary decisions" had greviously weakened the Navy. The chief rebuttal witnesses were Air Secretary Symington and General Omar Bradley, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Generals Eisenhower and Marshall, Secretary Johnson and ex-President Hoover also testified, generally asking for unity and cooperation and

an end to interservice politicing.[55] One thing that clearly emerged from the contentious testimony was that the integrated strategic viewpoint which unification promised had not been achieved.

Secretary of the Navy Francis P. Matthews, Sullivan's successor, wrote to Truman saying that ". . . for the good of the country, I respectfully request you as President and Commander in Chief to authorize the transfer of Admiral Denfeld to other important duties. . . ."[56] Matthews had the support of the Secretary of Defense in asking Truman to remove Denfeld as Chief of Naval Operations. Following some deliberation in the White House over the extent of the Commander in Chief's authority to remove Denfeld, who had just been confirmed by the Senate for re-appointment for another two-year term as CNO, Truman ordered his removal on October 27.[57]

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[55]Among the naval officers who attacked the prevailing policies during the controversy were Captain John G. Crommelin and Admirals William Halsey, Ernest King, Gerald Bogan, Arthur Radford, Thomas Kincaid, William Blandy, Ralph Ofstie, Chester Nimitz, Raymond Spruance, and General Vernon Magee of the Marine Corps. Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 473-76; Hammond, "NSC-68," 280-82.

[56]Matthews to Truman, October 27, 1949, Clifford Papers, Subject File, National Military Establishment--Navy, Truman Library.

[57]In a memorandum to Johnson's aide, an Assistant General Counsel in the Pentagon discussed the power of the President to remove the Chief of Naval Operations from office. He offered numerous legal precedents justifying such an action and added that it was "self-evident" that

Other officers were eventually transferred to "less sensitive" assignments or they retired, ending the "Revolt of the Admirals."

The revolt had revealed not only a fundamental failing of unification, it also had pointed up a lack of a fixed over-all military strategy. The President and the Bureau of the Budget still held--in principle--to the balanced-force concept of national defense, to which the military leadership paid at least a grudging lip-service. However, Truman's hard-money policy of fixing a $15 billion ceiling on the military budget in an inflationary period dictated, as Paul Hammond has written, ". . . increasing reliance solely on the most 'efficient' weapons system, strategic air atomic retaliation, which was a military capability designed for a showdown war with the Soviet

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the President, in his "constitutional power as Commander in Chief," had the unquestioned right to change the duty assignment of any subordinate officer as he pleased. Nathaniel Goodrich to Marx Leva, October 26, 1949, Clifford Papers, Subject File, National Military Establishment--Navy, Truman Library. Truman's authorization of the removal is contained in a memorandum, Truman to the Secretary of the Navy, October 27, 1949, ibid. For a published text of this message, see Item No. 241, Memorandum on the Transfer of Admiral Denfeld From the Post of Chief of Naval Operations, October 27, 1949, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1949, 535-36. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 53; Louis Johnson testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 4, 2681.

Union."[58] The value of this controversy was that it led to a study by the National Security Council of national military strategy. Their recommendations, contained in a very important policy paper submitted to Truman (discussed below) was implemented during the Korean War. In the interim between the Second World War and Korea, despite the inefficiencies and the lack of a coherent strategic policy, the American military establishment was adequate to the demands made upon it by the events of the Cold War.

It takes no more than an elemental knowledge of geography to comprehend the intense concern of the Soviet Union with the Dardanelles Straits. The straits are a direct warm-water gateway to Soviet commerce with the oil-rich Middle East. Premier Stalin had received at Potsdam the concurrence of the United States and Great Britain to a revision of the Montreaux Convention of 1936, which was an international agreement regarding control of the Straits. The Soviet Union desired a more favorable agreement. The United States, although not a signatory to

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[58]Hammond, "NSC-68," 281. Robert Osgood feels that Truman placed an ". . . overwhelming reliance on nuclear retaliation as the military means of containing Communism," because of a preoccupation with the threat of a third world war and a fascination with the "vast and strange power of the atomic bomb." Limited War, 151.

the original convention, indicated it would be a willing party to any new international agreement for controlling the use of the Dardanelles.[59]

On August 7, 1946, the Soviet Union sent a diplomatic note to Turkey insisting, among other things, in replacing the Montreaux Convention with a bilateral agreement which would eliminate British influence in Turkey and provide for joint Russo-Turkish control and the establishment of Russian military bases along the Straits.[60] Dean Acheson, then Under Secretary of State, considered the Soviet proposal merely a euphemism for the occupation of Turkey.[61] Acheson was ordered by Truman to prepare recommendations for him in consultation with the Secretaries of War and Navy and the Joint Chiefs.

The Committee had its report ready on August 15 and they met with Truman in the White House. Acheson told the President that the Committee was recommending that a

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[59]Byrnes, Speaking Frankly, 301; Alexander DeConde, A History of American Foreign Policy (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1963), 667. Hereinafter cited as DeConde, History of American Foreign Policy. Truman had been willing to go much further at Potsdam. Then he had urged the internationalization of the Rhine, Danube and Dardenelles, because, he claimed, all the wars of the preceding two centuries had originated in Central Europe. Neumann, After Victory, 173-74.

[60]DeConde, History of American Foreign Policy, 667; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 170.

[61]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 195.

strong diplomatic note be sent to the Soviet government, acknowledging the need for a revision of the Treaty of Montreaux, but insisting that there be no interference with the exclusive rights of Turkey to defend the Straits. To impress the Russians that the United States was in "deadly earnest" on the matter, Truman's advisers also felt that a strong naval force should be sent to the area. They recommended that the battleship Missouri, already at Istanbul on an unrelated mission, be held there and joined by the Mediterranean fleet, led by the newly-commissioned aircraft carrier, Franklin D. Roosevelt. Truman immediately approved the recommendations and asked that the diplomatic notes and orders be drafted at once.[62] General Eisenhower, who was present at the meeting as Army Chief of Staff, apparently taken aback by the abruptness of the President's decision, asked if Truman was cognizant of all the implications; the recommended course could lead to war with the Soviet Union. Acheson has recorded Truman's response:

> The President took from a drawer of his desk a large map of the Middle East and eastern Mediterranean and asked us to gather around behind him. He then gave us a brief lecture on the strategic importance of the area and the extent to which we must be prepared to

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[62] Ibid., 195-96; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 171. See also, LaFeber, America, Russia, and the Cold War, 28-29.

> go to keep it free from Soviet domination. When he finished, none of us doubted he understood fully all the implications of our recommendations.[63]

The American fleet moved into Turkish waters as soon as it was assembled. This naval presence was sufficient enough to cause the Soviet Union to ease its pressure on Turkey. The Turkish government felt it necessary to continue a full mobilization of its armed forces, a constant strain on the economy that sapped the government's resources. The Soviet Union switched its offensive pressures to the Balkan peninsula in hope of toppling the monarchical government of Greece.

Following the German withdrawal in late 1944, the Greek Government-in-exile returned to power. The Greek leadership was soon confronted by a Communist-inspired guerilla revolt against its authority. As a result of this struggle, the United States urged an international commission to supervise an election in Greece to determine majority will. The electorate, voting in March, 1946, chose the monarchical party of King George II. The Greek Communists, united under the banner of the National Liberation Front, resumed guerrilla warfare following their electroal defeat. The Greek insurrectionaries received substantial military equipment and supplies from the bordering Communist nations of Yugoslavia, Albania and

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[63]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 196.

Bulgaria. The Greek conservative leaders, or "monarcho-fascists," as the Soviet press styled them, were sustained in their struggles by the presence of British troops and a great deal of economic assistance from Great Britain.[64]

The British, facing grievous financial conditions at home, informed the United States in February 1947 that their financial and military support of Greece (and financial assistance to Turkey as well) would have to cease by March 31. The British expressed hope that the United States would be able to assume the burden of sustaining Greece and Turkey. The message from England underscored what American envoys in the field had been reporting: Because of inflation, corruption in the right-wing government, strikes and the effectiveness of the guerrilla forces, Greece was near collapse even with British aid. Without it, a Communist takeover was inevitable, unless the United States, the only nation then capable of such large-scale largesse, was willing to intervene.[65]

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[64]LaFeber, America, Russia, and the Cold War, 44. See also, Byrnes, Speaking Frankly, 299-300; DeConde, History of American Foreign Policy, 668-69; Major Problems of United States Foreign Policy, 1951-1952 (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1951), 365-66. Hereinafter cited as Major Problems of United States Foreign Policy.

[65]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 217; Truman, Memoirs, II, 99-100. See also, Fleming, The Cold War, I, 438-39; DeConde, History of American Foreign Policy, 669; Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 293; Sidney Warren, The

The Secretary of State, Goerge Marshall, was away on a speaking engagement when the British note arrived on February 21, so Under Secretary Acheson informed the President of its substance. Truman ordered Acheson to convene the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee for preparation of a detailed policy memorandum. Acheson reported to Truman on the Committee's progress as of the twenty-fourth. The basic recommendation was that Greece should receive whatever funds and military equipment the President could provide under existing legislative authority as soon as possible. Truman approved. On February 25 Truman met with the Congressional leadership. Truman, flustered by the glaring, but accidental ommission of Senator Robert Taft from the list of those invited, allowed Dean Acheson to brief the Congressmen on the situation and urge their support of an American aid program for Greece and Turkey. Acheson made a very effective presentation of the case. None of the Congressional leadership present saw fit to question the propriety of the nation extending a protective shield over Greece and Turkey.[66]

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President as World Leader (Philadelphia and New York: J. B. Lippincott, 1964), 310-11. Hereinafter cited as Warren, President as World Leader.

[66]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 218-19; Fleming, The Cold War, I, 439-40. In a subsequent meeting with the congressional leadership (including Senator Taft, this time), on March 10, Acheson felt the atmosphere was somewhat cooler. While Vandenberg was favorably disposed, no

The executive and legislative leadership were agreed then, at least in principle, that the United States should assume the historical British role of containing Russian expansionism in the eastern Mediterranean.

Secretary Marshall, accompanied by Acheson, brought Truman the policy recommendations on February 26. Their report carried the endorsement of the Coordination Committee, the Secretaries of War and Navy and the Joint Chiefs. Greece needed immediate and substantial assistance, the report stated, aid which only the United States was capable of providing. Turkey, while not in danger of immediate collapse from Russian pressure, could not long sustain its full mobilization without economic disaster. If either nation fell, the other would be seriously endangered. The choice was to abandon both to Communist ambition, or intervene directly and immediately. The report recommended the latter course to Truman and urged him to request an appropriation from Congress for economic and military aid for Greece and Turkey.[67] The President approved and ordered the State Department to

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legislator was willing to commit himself to the message proposals. Acheson, Present at the Creation, 222. Truman, discussing the same session, described it differently: "There was no opposition to what had to be done." Memoirs, II, 105. See also, Vandenberg, Private Papers, 343-44.

[67]Truman, Memoirs, II, 100; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 219.

draft an address to Congress.

When Truman finally received a satisfactory draft of his message, he arranged to appear before a Joint Session of the Congress on March 12, 1947. The President knew that what he was going to ask of the nation represented a dramatic reversal of traditional American peacetime isolationalism. He knew, he said, that the names of Washington and Clay and ". . . the other patron saints of isolationists" would be invoked against his stand. But he was thoroughly convinced that this action was essential to continued free world leadership by the United States.[68]

Truman began his speech by telling the Congress that a grave situation had arisen that involved the foreign policy and the national security of the United States. Truman then reviewed the desperate condition of Greece, repeatedly referring to Greece's democratic government, but acknowledging that that government had made some mistakes. He briefly summarized Turkey's need for financial support. The President then said that a primary objective of the foreign policy of the United States was to establish conditions whereby other nations ". . . will be able to work out a way of life free from coercion." Free people

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[68]Truman, Memoirs, II, 102. See also, McLellan and Reuss, "Foreign and Military Policies," 57.

could not maintain free institutions and national integrity against totalitarian aggressors unless other nations are willing to help them. "I believe," Truman said, "that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures."[69] This was the essential statement of what has come to be known as the Truman Doctrine. It represented a significant alteration of American policy, since it proposed that the United States stand as guarantor and protector, not just of Greece and Turkey, but of all "free, democratic nations" which were confronted by internal or external threats to the existing regime. While emphasizing that ". . . our help should be primarily through economic and financial aid. . . ," Truman did not preclude direct American military intervention.[70] It might well have been called the Truman Corollary, since it proposed a revival of the principles of Monroe's defunct doctrine and an expansion of the paternalistic protection of that doctrine to the

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[69]Item No. 56, President's Message to Congress on Greece and Turkey, March 12, 1947, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1947, 178-79. The speech is excerpted in Truman, Memoirs, II, 106-108; Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), The Truman Administration, 251-56.

[70]Item No. 56, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1947, 178-79. It was this vagueness and universality of the doctrine which brought objections from George F. Kennan, director of the Policy Planning Board of the State Department. See his Memoirs, 319-22.

Eastern, as well as the Western Hemisphere.[71]

Specifically, Truman asked the Congress for $400 million for assistance to Greece and Turkey in the present fiscal year. He also requested permission to send civilian and military personnel as financial, political and military advisers, with the latter also serving as instructors in the use of American weapons. In addition, the President asked Congress to provide him with the authority to implement this assistance in the fastest and most efficient manner possible.[72] Implicit throughout the message was the identification of the Soviet Union as the malefactor and the recognition that the United Nations Organization was too weak to perform its primal function.

News media reaction to the address was mixed, but all seemed to recognize that the implications of Truman's proposal went well beyond simply aiding Greece and Turkey. The New York Times endorsed the speech as signalling an end to the era of "isolation and occasional intervention"

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[71]Journalist Arthur Krock, writing on March 22, 1947, compared the Truman and Monroe Doctrines: ". . . both are founded on the fear that our freedom is threatened by ambitious European powers, and both were precipitated by Russian policy." See Krock, In the Nation: 1932-1966 (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966), 175. Hereinafter cited as Krock, In the Nation.

[72]Item No. 56, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1947, 179. See also, Fleming, The Cold War, I, 443.

and the beginning of "an epoch of American responsibility."[73] The Baltimore Sun editorial writer lamented the shift in thinking with respect to the Russians reflected in this address, ". . . from the possibility, and the necessity, of finding a formula for living together to emphasis on the differences which divide us."[74] The Philadelphia Inquirer called the assistance program, "a task we must not shirk."[75] The Miami Herald headlined, "Truman Doctrine Means U.S. Takes Road to Bankruptcy."[76] A New York writer urged the use of American troops if necessary, because ". . . to rule out any possibility of military support in advance removes any possibility of success. We would in that case merely be throwing our money away."[77] The Chicago Tribune felt that "the outcome will inevitably be war. . . . We are to have the 'commander in chief' back with us again."[78] "He was asking America to be Atlas," according to a Washington Post editorial, "offering to lead his country in that

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[73]New York Times, March 12, 1947.

[74]Baltimore Sun, March 13, 1947.

[75]Philadelphia Inquirer, March 13, 1947.

[76]Miami Herald, April 13, 1947.

[77]George F. Eliot, New York Herald-Tribune, March 18, 1947.

[78]Chicago Tribune, March 13, 1947.

tremendous role, yet his flat voice carried no significance of his fateful recommendation."[79] Izvestia described the Truman Doctrine as ". . . a fresh intrusion of the U.S.A. into the affairs of other states," which was designed to place Turkey and Greece under American control.[80]

A Gallup poll on the Truman Doctrine proposal found the people, like the newspapers, divided, with a majority favoring assistance. For example, eighty-three percent were in favor of sending civilian advisers to Greece, but only fifty-six percent approved of financial aid. The same questions with respect to Turkey found seventy-seven percent endorsing civilian advisers, but only forty-nine percent backing the financial assistance. Only thirty percent of those surveyed felt that lending the money to both nations would lead the United States into war, but less than one-third supported the sending of military advisers to either country. There was some inconsistency in these views however, for sixty-eight percent agreed that if another nation found itself in a situation similar to Greece's, the United States would have to take action.[81]

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[79] Washington Post, March 13, 1947.

[80] Izvestia, March 13, 1947, quoted in Williams (ed.), Shaping of American Diplomacy, 1003-1005.

[81] Philadelphia Bulletin, March 29, 1947.

The President had hoped that Congress would act on his proposals before March 31, 1947, the deadline Great Britain had set for the cut-off of their assistance to Turkey and Greece. But the public hearings on the bill and the floor debate continued through March and late into April. Finally the Greek-Turkish Aid Bill passed the Senate by a vote of 67 to 23 and the House, 287 to 107.[82] In signing ceremonies on May 22, Truman called the Aid Bill ". . . an important step in the building of the peace." He also said that the "overwhelming majorities" it received in both Houses of Congress was ". . . proof that the United States earnestly desires peace and is willing to make a vigorous effort to help create conditions of peace."[83] On May 22 Truman also issued Executive Order 9857, which contained the regulations for carrying out the

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[82]As enacted, the bill is Public Law 75, 80 Cong., 1 Sess., (61 Stat. 103). See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 108; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 176; Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 294; LaFeber, America, Russia, and the Cold War, 45-46; DeConde, History of American Foreign Policy, 670. One writer uses the Greek-Turkish aid bill as an example for his contention that the President, because of his international stature and the worldwide distribution of his remarks on almost any subject, can commit the nation to a particular course, leaving the Congress little choice save to acquiesce when he comes to that body for approval. Crabb, American Foreign Policy, 59.

[83]Item No. 100, Statement by the President Upon Signing Bill Endorsing the Truman Doctrine, May 22, 1947, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1947, 254-55.

provisions of the bill.[84] The order delegated the authority conferred on the President by the act to the Secretary of State, George Marshall. It also allowed Marshall to subdelegate his authority to "Chiefs of Mission" for Greece and Turkey. Marshall actually wrote the order for the President which facilitated his carrying out the task of Greek-Turkish aid Truman had entrusted to him.[85]

The Communist-led Greek rebels intensified their attacks after Truman announced his intention to aid the government of Greece in opposing them. Their success, particularly in northern Greece, led the American embassy to report on June 9 that there was a "marked deterioration" in the government's position. A week later, the Greek government sent an urgent appeal for an acceleration in the delivery of critical materials and for a greater portion of American aid to be allocated to weapons and other military supplies.[86] Secretary Marshall, agreeing with the first part of their message, asked Truman to indicate to the agencies involved the urgent necessity of

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[84]Executive Order 9857, March 22, 1947 (3 C.F.R., 1943-1948 Comp., 646).

[85]Marshall to Patterson, April 30, 1947, RG165, USA, 092-Plans and Operations, Case No. 96, National Archives.

[86]Truman, Memoirs, II, 108.

their hastening the procurement and shipment of materials destined for Greece.[87] Truman complied with Marshall's request, asking the Secretary of War, for example, to spare no effort in employing the full power and facilities of his office in expediting, as efficiently as possible, the Greek aid program.[88] Eventually, by the fall of 1949, the American aid and advisers brought about a shift in the balance of power that led to the triumph of the government over the guerrillas. This was accomplished with some difficulty because the Greek leadership continually attempted to use all American aid for military purposes, to suppress opposition, rather than to stabilize the economy and broaden their base of popular support. Turkey, not facing a massive internal revolt, was a far less serious problem. U.S. financial aid was sufficient to continue the Turkish mobilization without endangering the economy.[89]

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[87]Marshall to Truman, June 27, 1947, RG407, AG091.3, National Archives.

[88]Truman to Royall, August 30, 1947, ibid.

[89]Major Problems of United States Foreign Policy, 264-65; Truman, Memoirs, II, 109. Some observers have noted a curious lack of uniformity in U.S. policy towards Greece and China. In the same period of time that the United States was providing the werewithal to suppress Communist insurgents in Greece, the American government provided some military, economic and technical aid to the Nationalist Chinese, but encouraged them to form a coalition government with the Communists. See Osgood, Limited War, 162.

Truman considered the decision to take over Britain's commitment to aid Greece and Turkey one of the most important of his acts, because it set an entirely new pattern in foreign policy.[90] However, he later said that it was incorrect to call this decision the "Truman Doctrine" since he had obtained the consent of the leaders in Congress before implementing this policy.[91]

The idea that the United States should shore up the endangered economies and political structures of Greece and Turkey led to the proposition that other nations should get the same aid before they collapsed from Communist pressure. With this in mind, and with Truman's endorsement, Dean Acheson made a speech at Cleveland, Mississippi, in May 1947.[92] He told his audience that many nations needed outside aid in recovery or their people would seek desperate remedies.[93] Increased appropriations were needed, he said, as well as power to allocate commodities that were in short supply.[94] The speech had little impact in the U.S. press, but received thorough coverage in Europe.[95]

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[90]Phillips, "Truman at 75," 107.

[91]Truman Speaks, 70.

[92]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 226-28.

[93]Acheson's speech, May 8, 1947, is printed in Williams (ed.), Shaping of American Diplomacy, 1006.

[94]Ibid.; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 229.

[95]Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 295.

Soon after, Secretary Marshall agreed to speak at Harvard's commencement on June 5. Truman participated in drafting the proposals Marshall made at Harvard and he was the first to call it the "Marshall Plan."[96] Marshall spoke of the demoralizing effect of economic deprivation in Europe, and the chance that severe disturbances might arise out of the desperation the people endured. He said that America was the logical nation to provide assistance.[97] Marshall then called upon European nations to come together and agree among themselves as to their needs and as to what each country could do to help itself and its neighbors. The United States would then assume the burden of assistance to the limits of its available resources.[98]

The European response to the Marshall address was immediate and enthusiastic. Sixteen nations of Western Europe banded together as the Organization for European Economic Cooperation. They made detailed studies of the long-term needs of their region and, in mid-August, submitted a request for American financial assistance in

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[96]Truman, Memoirs, II, 114.

[97]Marshall's address, June 5, 1947, is printed in Lawrence S. Kaplan (ed.), NATO and the Policy of Containment (Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath and Company, 1968), 8. Hereinafter cited as Kaplan (ed.), NATO and the Policy of Containment.

[98]Ibid., 8-9. See also, Rees, Age of Containment, 22; LaFeber, America, Russia, and the Cold War, 48-49; Truman, Memoirs, II, 113-15.

the amount of $30 billion over a four-year period. The proposed total was reduced to a more manageable $17 billion in Truman's request for the appropriation from Congress on December 19, 1947. Describing his plans for the European Recovery Program (Marshall Plan) in this message, Truman tied the recovery of Europe to American security: ". . . I am proposing that this Nation contribute to world peace and to its own security by assisting in the recovery of sixteen countries which . . . are devoted to the preservation of free institutions and enduring peace among nations."[99] But the European Recovery Act did not pass until April, 1948, subsequent to a Communist coup d'etat in Czechoslovakia and more prodding of Congress by Truman in another message on March 17. When the European Recovery Program ended in 1951, actual appropriations to the European Cooperative Administration, counterpart to the OEEC in America, totalled $12.5 billion.[100]

The Marshall Plan, working on the "belly reform"

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[99]Item No. 238, Special Message to Congress on the Marshall Plan, December 19, 1947, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1947, 528. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 117-19.

[100]Crabb, American Foreign Policy, 226-28; American Military History, 537-38; Warren, President as World Leader, 315-16; Rees, Age of Containment, 22-23; LaFeber, America, Russia, and the Cold War, 64. The European Recovery Program (Marshall Plan) was later merged with the military assistance program into an administrative structure known as the Mutual Security Administration. Truman, Memoirs, II, 119.

premise that Communism appeals only to hungry and desperate people, went a long way toward restoring European prosperity and equalizing trade inbalances. The motivation of the United States in pursuing this recovery program was justified by the Truman Administration in terms of economic and humanitarian reasons. However, beyond these considerations was the growing East-West schism that caused a high strategic importance to be placed on bolstering the economies of nations that might otherwise fall into the Soviet camp.

The commitment of the United States to the political status quo in the Balkans and western Europe was more than an economic tie; it carried with it the strong implication that America would resort to military intervention to sustain these governments and its own substantial investments. However, the United States did not have sufficient forces-in-being to back up this implied commitment. For while the services argued for a build-up of their force levels to meet any challenges on the European continent, they generally faced budgetary cutbacks in the late Forties. The Marshall Plan and Greek-Turkish Aid were "measures short of war," designed to prevent the spread of the Communist philosophy of government. They have succeeded to the extent that the nations involved remained more-or-less democratic in their

governmental organization.[101] The Marshall Plan was a natural outgrowth of the Truman Doctrine. At the same time, however, the Truman Doctrine was hardening into a policy called containment.[102]

The thinking underlying the attitude toward communism in the containment policy is similar to that of the Republicans toward slavery in the pre-Civil War period. Although they would have been happiest if slavery were to disappear, they were at least determined that this pernicious institution be prevented from expanding beyond the boundaries of the region where it already existed. So, too, with the advocates of containment, who maintained that:

> . . . the main element of any United States policy toward the Soviet Union must be that of a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies. . . . the Soviet pressure against the free institutions of the Western world is something that can be contained by the adroit and

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[101] Hammond, "Super Carriers and B-36 Bombers," 472-73. See also, Phillips, Truman Presidency, 194. Robert Osgood says that Greek-Turkish aid reflected a view in the White House and mong the foreign and military advisers to the President, that the Middle East and the Mediterranean regions formed a strategic unity, no part of which could be allowed to fall to Russian imperialism if the United States were to preserve the geopolitical basis of its security. Yet, Osgood notes, it was not in these terms that the decision was presented to Congress and the general public. See Limited War, 146-47.

[102] Major Problems of United States Foreign Policy, 28.

> vigilant application of counter-force at a series of constantly shifting geographical and political points. . . .[103]

George Frost Kennan, Director of the Policy Planning Staff of the State Department in 1947, is the putative "father of the containment doctrine." Although he has since denied paternity,[104] the first known outlines of such a policy appear in a cable Kennan sent to the State Department on February 22, 1946, while he was still chargé d'affaires in Moscow.[105] Secretary of the Navy Forrestal was greatly impressed with the cable and had Kennan write a paper for him elaborating on these views. Finally, at Forrestal's insistence, Kennan's paper received wide publicity when it was anonymously published in Foreign Affairs, an influential quarterly, in July, 1947.[106] The quotation (above) from the article contains the gist

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[103]Quoted from George F. Kennan's article (under the pseudonym, "Mr. X"), "Sources of Soviet Conduct," Foreign Affairs (July, 1947), as reprinted in Williams (ed.), Shaping of American Diplomacy, 996. The article is summarized in Phillips, Truman Presidency, 259-62.

[104]See, for example, Kennan's disclaimer in his Memoirs, 358-67.

[105]Kennan's cable is quoted verbatim in Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), Truman Administration, 198-212. For a summation and analysis of the Kennan cable, see Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, Editor's Note, 135-40. See also, Rogow, Victim of Duty, 177-80.

[106]Forrestal's role in having the containment paper published is described in Rogow, Victim of Duty, 180-81.

of the fundamental policy-line of the containment doctrine.

Truman has said that it is a mistake to call his foreign policy a policy of containment: "This is not true. Our purpose was much broader. We were working for a united, free, and prosperous world."[107] Euphemisms aside, the application of American policy has fit the pattern called containment. Since 1947 the United States has become party to regional military alliances having the effect of encirclement of the Communist-bloc nations; has met the threat of Soviet force with the threat of counter-force; and has met Communist aggression in Korea and IndoChina with Military intervention.

Truman believed that the Marshall Plan, promising hope and assistance to the peoples of Europe, seriously upset Soviet attempts at gaining hegemony over all of Europe. Soviet reaction to the Marshall Plan, according to Truman, precipitated a serious military confrontation with the United States in 1948. As he explained:

> Russia was caught off guard by the Marshall Plan. Moscow quickly realized that when the Marshall Plan began to function, the opportunity to communize western Europe by exploiting her economic miseries would be lost. Failing to prevent Allied co-operation for European recovery, Russia sought to retaliate by two moves. The first move was to set up a counterpart of a Marshall Plan under Russian auspices for her satellites. . . .
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> The second and even more provocative move was to

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[107] Truman, Memoirs, II, 290.

> risk a military incident in Berlin designated to test our firmness and patience.[108]

The Allied "Big Three" conferences at Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam had defined the status of postwar Germany. The city of Berlin, deep within the Russian zone of Germany, was divided into zones of occupation itself, just as the German nation had been. For the immediate postwar period, Germany was to be governed by an Allied Control Council, sitting at Berlin, whose membership was to be made up of the Allied military commanders in chief. In practice, these military leaders acted as a supreme authority for Germany, but they operated under a regrettable rule which required unanimity for action. The general principles that guided their deliberations had been established at Potsdam and provided that, in most matters, Germany was to be regarded as an entity, with uniform treatment for all citizens, and to whatever extent feasible, freedom of the press, speech and religion were to be restored. Further, Germany was to be treated as a single economic unit, with common operational policies established on such matters as trade, industrial production, agriculture, currency and banking,

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[108] Ibid., 120.

transportation, communications, wages, prices and rationing.[109]

What had been agreed to in principle with respect to Germany, did not often pertain in actual practice. In the American zone, steps were taken to implement the Potsdam Agreement, with Eisenhower moving rapidly to turn governmental administration over to civilian authority. As the General wrote to Truman in November of 1945: ". . . separation of occupational and governmental responsibility is sound . . . if for no other reason than because of its conformity to the American principle of keeping the Army as such out of the civil government."[110] The Russians, however, began to intensify control over their zone and eliminate contacts with other parts of Germany. It became increasingly difficult to treat Germany as a single economic unit because of Soviet policy. Eventually, the British and American governments, later joined by the French, created machinery to deal with their combined zones as a unit, to the exclusion of the Soviet zone of occupation. However, the access of the western

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[109]W. Phillips Davison, The Berlin Blockade: A Study in Cold War Politics (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1958), 3-6. Hereinafter cited as Davison, Berlin Blockade. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 120.

[110]Eisenhower to Truman, October 26, 1945, Eisenhower Papers, PF/DDE, Truman folder (1), Eisenhower Library. See also, Truman to Eisenhower, November 2, 1945, ibid.

powers to their zones of occupation in Berlin was by narrow corridors through the Soviet-controlled zone.[111]

The access corridors through the Soviet Zone of Germany were not guaranteed by any written agreement. The Western Powers had agreed that Germany should be governed from Berlin, deep in the Soviet sector, but their right of access to their respective enclaves in Berlin was not formally stipulated. The Soviet governor for Germany, Marshall Zhukov, had orally assured General Lucius Clay, Eisenhower's deputy, that the simple presence of American and other forces in Berlin presumed the right of access. The Russians initially provided ample access by a railroad line, highway and an air corridor.[112] The absence of a bilaterally-guaranteed permanent access route to Berlin became a serious issue in 1948 when the Soviets chose to block the land corridors. As journalist Arthur Krock wrote, ". . . we can't throw the book at them, because there is no book."[113]

On March 5, 1948, a few days after the communist

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[111]Davison, Berlin Blockade, 8-9; Truman, Memoirs, II, 120.

[112]Davison, Berlin Blockade, 4; Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 258. Steinberg says that Truman blames Eisenhower for the lack of a written agreement, but offers no evidence.

[113]Krock, "Background to the Berlin Blockade," New York Times, July 7, 1948, reprinted in Krock, In the Nation, 178-79.

coup in Czechoslovakia, General Clay, military governor of the U.S. zone, dispatched a message to the Army's director of Intelligence:

> For many months, based on logical analysis, I have felt and held that war was unlikely for at least ten years. Within the last few weeks, I have felt a subtle change in Soviet attitude which I cannot define but which now gives me a feeling that it may come with dramatic suddenness. I cannot support this change in my own thinking with any data or outward evidence in relationships other than to describe it as a feeling of a new tenseness in every Soviet individual with whom we have official relations. I am unable to submit any official report in the absence of supporting data but my feeling is real. You may advise the Chief of Staff of this for whatever it may be worth if you feel it advisable.[114]

Walter Millis says that Clay's cable had a "cataclysmic" effect on the Pentagon and the White House. The Central Intelligence Agency was set to work studying the possibility of war. On March 16 they reported to Truman that ". . . major war was not probable within sixty days."[115] The following day, the President spoke to a

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[114]Cable is quoted in Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 387. See also, Millis, Arms and Men, 285; Davison, Berlin Blockade, 73; Hammond, "Super Carriers and B-36 Bombers," 473.

[115]Millis, Arms and Men, 255. During the Berlin Crisis, members of Forrestal's staff prepared a report for the Secretary of Defense on the power of the President to declare a state of national emergency. Forrestal was informed that the Commander in Chief could declare a state of limited or unlimited national emergency upon his own discretion and that the consent of Congress, while desirable, was not necessary. Memorandum (unsigned) to Forrestal, March 29, 1948, RG330, OSD, President, 1947-1949, National Archives.

Joint Session of Congress on "The Threat to the Freedom of Europe." He directly attacked the Soviet Union for obstructionism in the United Nations and the destruction of ". . . the independence and democratic character of a whole series of nations in Eastern and Central Europe."[116] He spoke of the "ruthless course" and "growing menace" of Soviet imperialism and summed up with a call for additional action, saying that "there are times in world history when it is far wiser to act than to hesitate."[117] Considering the tone of his speech, Truman's requests were relatively mild. He asked for passage of two stalled programs: universal military trining and the Marshall Plan, as well as the temporary reinstitution of selective service.[118]

General Clay was notified by the Russians on March 31, 1948, that they intended henceforth to check the identification papers of all American military personnel and check all freight shipments traveling through the Soviet zone. Clay informed the Pentagon that he proposed to order his troop trains to continue their normal runs and to ". . . prevent the Russians from coming aboard and

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[116]Item No. 52, Special Message to Congress on the Threat to the Freedom of Europe, March 17, 1948, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1948, 183.

[117]Ibid., 184.

[118]Ibid., 185.

shoot if necessary."[119] Forrestal met immediately with the service secretaries and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. They recommended an order to Clay, which Truman subsequently approved, telling the General that his troops were not to open fire, except in self-defense. The trains went through to the East German border, where they were stopped. When the Americans refused to allow a search by Soviet personnel, the trains were turned back. There was no shooting. Had fighting begun, the United States Army could have bolstered the occupation forces by only one division (approximately 15,000 troops) without reverting to mobilization.[120]

Throughout April, May and June, the Soviet military authorities made it increasingly difficult to get into or out of Berlin. On June 18, 1948, Britain, France and the United States, in a move to halt an inflationary spiral, announced that they were to immediately establish a new type of currency for the three western zones of Germany. The Soviets opposed this change, according to Truman, ". . . because it exposed the basic unsoundness of their own currency." That the Russians considered this important

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[119]Davison, Berlin Blockade, 73; Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 408; Truman, Memoirs, II, 122.

[120]Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 407; Truman, Memoirs, II, 122.

is illustrated by Truman's statement that "They offered to reopen the approaches to the city of Berlin if the Western powers would call off the currency change-over."[121] The three nations refused the Soviet offer, although this meant violation of that part of the original agreement which provided for a single economic and financial policy for all of Germany. The Soviet Union, of course, had violated both the spirit and letter of the agreement on numerous occasions.

As an apparent reaction to the announced currency reforms, all rail traffic to the three western zones of Berlin was cut off completely by Soviet officials on June 21. At six o'clock on the morning of the twenty-fourth, all highway, river and canal traffic was also halted. U.S. Air Force C-47 transport planes, on orders of General Clay, had begun a small-scale airlift of foodstuffs into Berlin on the 21st.[122] But the western sectors of Berlin with two million residents became an island, totally devoid of any surface contact outside their

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[121]Truman, Memoirs, II, 122.

[122]LaFeber, America, Russia, and the Cold War, 70; Rees, Age of Containment, 28. See also, "Berlin Airlift," A report in RG330, OSD, D70-1-5, National Archives. It seems evident that the "technical difficulties" the Soviet Union used to explain the full blockade of the 24th were, in reality, the currency reforms. The exchange of old for new currency was to begin on the 25th. Davison, Berlin Blockade, 105-106.

boundaries. The only way left to enter or leave Berlin was by air. A written agreement existed, dated November 30, 1945, establishing three twenty mile-wide air corridors over the Soviet zone.[123]

Despite the three months of increasing pressure and restrictions on access to Berlin, there was, apparently, no contingency plan in force at the time the blockade was established. The planners in Washington would have to improvise a solution. The basic decision the President had to make involved three alternatives: Order American forces to abandon the city, postpone any positive measures or force a military confrontation by sending an armed column down the blockaded highway to Berlin, as General Clay had suggested. Truman decided to defer any irrevocable decision until the situation was clarified. A meeting of the President with the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of the Army and Under Secretary of State Lovett on June 25 was inconclusive, dealing only with the legality of the American position in Berlin. On June 26 Truman ordered that Clay's improvised airlift be continued and stepped up to meet the immediate needs of the Berliners,

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[123]Davison, Berlin Blockade, 33-34.

as well as those of American military personnel.[124]

Truman's order of June 26 to continue the airlift did not anticipate that the planes were to be anything more than a stopgap measure, a way to temporize until diplomatic means could be found to settle the Berlin Crisis. The following day, General Curtis LeMay, Air Force Commander at Wiesbaden, European headquarters of the U.S. Air Force, cabled Washington a request for forty-five C-54 heavy transport planes. The C-47's available to LeMay had only a three-ton load capacity, whereas the newer and larger C-54 could lift ten tons.[125] To meet the need for transports in Germany, a total of fifty-four C-54 aircraft were eventually moved from bases in Alaska, Hawaii, the Caribbean and the United States.[126] General Hoyt Vandenberg, Air Force Chief of Staff, protested to Truman that this concentration of aircraft in one region seriously endangered national security, but the President overruled him.[127]

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[124]Truman, Memoirs, II, 123. See also, Millis, Arms and Men, 288; Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 451-52; Davison, Berlin Blockade, 75, 106-107, 131; John Lukacs, A History of the Cold War (Rev. ed.; Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Incorporated, 1962), 70. Hereinafter cited as Lukacs, History of the Cold War.

[125]"Berlin Airlift," RG330, OSD, D70-1-5, National Archives.

[126]Ibid.

[127]Truman, Memoirs, II, 125.

Secretary of Defense Forrestal met with top Pentagon officials on Sunday, June 27, 1948, to discuss what recommendations they should make to the President the following day on Berlin.[128] Those present were agreed that the existing supplies in Berlin, plus additional material that could be brought in by air, would allow approximately sixty days before the logistical situation became critical. The group spent considerable time on the alternatives of abandonment, the difficulty of remaining under extant circumstances and the odds of war if they opted to force their way into Berlin. According to Forrestal's diary record of the meeting, there was no consideration given to the possibility that the airlift provided another choice. The planners may have been influenced by General Clay's initial estimate that the airlift could bring in a maximum of 500 to 700 tons a day, whereas the food requirements for West Berlin were estimated at 1,100 tons a day.[129] The meeting adjourned after deciding that Forrestal, Lovett and Royall should meet with the President the following day, apprise him of the alternatives and the arguments for and against each.

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[128]In addition to Forrestal, among those present at the June 27 meeting were Under Secretary Lovett, Secretaries Royall and Sullivan of the Army and Navy, respectively, and Generals Bradley and Norstad.

[129]Davison, Berlin Blockade, 105, 112, 150-51. See also, Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 452-54; New York Times, July 5, 1948.

They were also to discuss sending two squadrons of B-29 bombers to Germany or England. The advantage of negotiating with nuclear weapon carriers within striking distance of the Soviet Union could not be ignored.[130]

Secretary Lovett began the meeting with the President on June 28 by reciting the options derived from the Pentagon meeting the previous day. Truman interrupted him to say that there was no discussion necessary on staying in Berlin; he had no intention of pulling out.[131] This major decision represents one of the infrequent instances of Truman making a command decision without benefit of considerable deliberation and recommendations by his staff of military advisers. The latter were still busily trying to decide if the United States should attempt to remain in Berlin.[132]

The President made two other command decisions in the meeting on the twenty-eighth, in addition to the pivotal decision to stay in Berlin. He agreed to the sending of additional B-29 bombers to Germany, a decision

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[130] Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 453-54.

[131] Ibid., 454. See also, LaFeber, America, Russia, and the Cold War, 70; Millis, Arms and Men, 288.

[132] O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 42-43. O'Connor claims, but without adequate substantiation, that the JCS had to overcome Truman's "predisposition" to break the blockade by means of an armed convoy.

with which Clay heartily concurred, since he did not have enough of a conventional land force in Germany to confront the Russians. (Nor was he to obtain such a force. On the basis of existing Army manpower and global requirements, no additional troops could be made available for Germany.) Truman also instructed the National Military Establishment to take whatever steps were necessary to make the airlift sufficient to the immediate needs of West Berlin.[133] Truman has recalled the reasoning behind these decisions in his Memoirs:

> The Russians were obviously determined to force us out of Berlin. They had suffered setbacks recently in Italy, in France, and in Finland. Their strongest satellite, Yugoslavia, had suddenly developed a taste for independent action, and the European Recovery Program was beginning to succeed. The blockade of Berlin was international Communism's counterattack. . . . Our position in Berlin was precarious. If we wished to remain there, we would have to make a show of strength. But there was always the risk that Russian reaction might lead to war. We had to face the possibility that Russia might deliberately choose to make Berlin the pretext for war. . . .[134]

The actions and decisions of the Commander in Chief during the early days of the Berlin Crisis are both unusual and revealing. What seems most obvious is that he bypassed the very institutional framework he had worked to create. One of the prime purposes of the Armed Forces

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[133]Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 454-55. See also, O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 42-43; Davison, Berlin Blockade, 110-11.

[134]Truman, Memoirs, II, 123-24.

unification that Truman had brought into being was to establish an efficient, clear line of communication in the command system. The National Security Council recommendations to the President were not yet before him when he acted. The Central Intelligence Agency had failed to anticipate the Soviet move. The Joint Chiefs of Staff were still debating alternatives, but were at least certain that the airlift Truman endorsed could not work for any extended period. The War Council of the National Military Establishment seems to have been moribund during this crisis period. In the normal, institutionalized process Truman had established, policy recommendations would have come up to the Commander in Chief from the military advisers represented in these bodies. In this instance, Truman decided on a course of action--to stay in Berlin and supply the city by air--and he then convinced his military advisers that it would work. In the hectic days of the Korean decision the President would again bypass part of the staff process which he otherwise placed great faith in.[135]

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[135]In an editorial note, Walter Millis cites many of the same factors mentioned here. He sees the June 27 Pentagon session as an ad hoc response which bypassed ". . . the formal machinery of the Security Act to take large (if rather vague) politico-strategic decisions." Forrestal Diaries, 454. LaFeber, in America, Russia, and the Cold War (p. 70) writes: "Without consulting anyone

By early July the airlift, which someone in the Air Force with a singular lack of imagination had code-named "Operation Vittles," was beginning to show signs that it could succeed against all odds. Much of the burden had been eased by the arrival in late June of the four-engine C-54 Skymaster transports, which had triple the capacity of the smaller C-47's.[136] The British Royal Air Force soon joined in the airlift, taking up approximately one-third of the burden. To make the operation more efficient, the British and American air elements were joined in October, 1948, into the Combined Airlift Task Force.[137] In the 324 days of the airlift, well over a quarter million flights were made, delivering a total of over two million tons of food and other supplies necessary to the survival of the people of Berlin.[138]

The National Security Council had studied at length the proposal to send B-29 atomic bombers to bases in Great Britain, which the British were willing to accept, although, supposedly, they would be armed with nuclear weapons. In

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but a few Cabinet advisors, Truman decided. . . ." This is not accurate and it conveys a false impression that Truman had acted intemperately. See also, O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 43.

[136]"Berlin Airlift," RG330, OSD, D70-1-5, National Archives.

[137]Davison, Berlin Blockade, 195.

[138]Rees, Age of Containment, 28.

a report to Truman, July 15, 1948, the NSC recommended, and the President approved, this move. They reasoned that it would underscore the seriousness of the current crisis to the public, provide experience for the Air Force and accustom the British people to having the atomic bombers around as a permanent fixture.[139]

The atomic bombers stationed in Germany and now in England were obviously designed to intimidate the Russians. At the same time the Berlin crisis provided the perfect cover for a permanent long-range decision to extend the atomic perimeter around the Soviet Union. The first American Strategic Air Command base in Great Britain was established as a direct result of the Berlin blockade. However, it is not at all certain that these planes were carrying atomic bombs. Whether they were or not remains a military secret.[140]

Beginning in the spring of 1948, as the Berlin crisis developed, Secretary of Defense Forrestal tried to get the President to formulate a specific atomic policy as to whether or not the U.S. would ever use the bomb again in war, and, if so, under what circumstances. The Secretary also wanted Truman to transfer custody of the atomic

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[139]Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 457; Davison, Berlin Blockade, 129-30.

[140]Millis, Arms and Men, 289.

bombs from the Atomic Energy Commission to the Air Force, arguing that those responsible for using the weapon when ordered to do so, should possess it.[141] In the next few months Truman displayed an unusual reluctance to decide the issues on nuclear policy that Forrestal had raised. In a meeting on July 15, 1948, the Defense Secretary informally raised the subject of atom bomb custody again. The President told Forrestal that he wanted to keep the decision on use of the bomb "in his own hands." According to Forrestal's diary entry for this date, Truman said that he did not intend ". . . to have some dashing lieutenant colonel decide when would be the proper time to drop one."[142] Six days later, the NME formally requested an executive order transferring bomb custody from the AEC to the Military Establishment. Truman reserved decision on the transfer, but commented that since the responsibility was his, he proposed to keep that power intact. Two days later, June 23, he privately told Forrestal he was going to reject the proposed transfer of bomb custody to the military. Forrestal claimed the President admitted that his decision was politically-inspired, but that after the presidential race was over he would be willing to reconsider

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[141]Rogow, Victim of Duty, 183-84; Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 458.

[142]Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 458.

his position.[143] In fact, the issue of civilian or military custody--presuming proper fail-safe systems--is of only passing importance, since only a civilian, the Commander in Chief, can order their employment. Of far greater significance is the question of whether they should be used. And on this, Truman clearly wanted to keep his options open.

The President's reluctance to fix conditions under which he would approve nuclear warfare, while understandable, created serious problems for military contingency planners. This was particularly true in the bellicose atmosphere of 1948 when available conventional forces were at their lowest levels. The reduction in military appropriations, except for strategic bombers, indicated a reliance on massive nuclear retaliation in the even of total war. A conventional military response in a limited conflict could not be planned for, since, in lieu of a stipulated nuclear policy, the guiding assumption prescribed that the American response to attack would be strategic atom-bombing of the aggressor.

The atom bombers went to European stations without an established policy as to the use of the weapons which

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[143] Ibid., 460-61. Forrestal records Truman repeating these political considerations with General Marshall present on September 16. See ibid., 490.

were--theoretically at least--nestled in their bellies.[144] The B-29's were atomic guns pointed at the Soviet heartland. Soviet intelligence was reasonably sure Truman would not pull the nuclear trigger over Berlin. However, neither they, nor Truman's military advisers, really knew. Forrestal discussed this policy vacuum with the President several times in July and August, without receiving a conclusive response.[145] The Defense Secretary persisted in pressing Truman for a nuclear-use policy and was rewarded with an answer, of sorts, on September 13: ". . . the President prayed that he would never have to make such a decision, but that if it became necessary, no one need have a misgiving but what he should do so."[146] The Secretary must have considered the answer satisfactory for, as Millis noted editorially, "Forrestal never again felt it necessary to raise the matter with the President."[147]

Whether or not they carried atomic bombs, with or without a clearly-defined policy, the B-29's Truman ordered to Europe changed the military and diplomatic policies of

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[144]Davison, Berlin Blockade, 156.

[145]Ibid.

[146]Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 487.

[147]Ibid.; Schilling, "Politics of National Defense," 173-74.

the United States. In a brilliant passage from his Arms and Men, Walter Millis has analyzed the effect on policy of the B-29's:

> . . . when at last they roared off across the Atlantic, they were bringing the nuclear weapons for the first time directly into the system of diplomacy and violence by which the affairs of peoples were thenceforth to be regulated. . . . The Berlin crisis itself was successfully met by . . . essentially nonmilitary means, and the fact that they succeeded may have contributed to the continued American inattention to the military foundations of the new world order which was developing. There was no real review of the military problem. . . .
>
> Yet in another sense, 1948 represents a major divide in American military thought. The atomic bombers had gone to Britain. . . . The bombs exploded over Hiroshima and Nagasaki had represented a one-shot, last-ditch effort, so to speak, to bring to an end a war which already had taken its toll of millions; and the first impulse in the aftermath had been to insure that such things would never be used in war again. By 1948 the impulse had died; it was plain that the atomic arsenal had entered American thought as an appropriate instrument of policy for the future.
>
> It was still a back-door, largely unacknowledged entrance. The supposed atomic monopoly lay somewhere behind nearly every policy decision in the military field, but outwardly things went on much as before.[148]

The Secretaries of State and Defense met with the President on July 19 to review the Berlin situation. General Marshall emphasized to Truman that if he did not hold to a "firm policy" there, then the remainder of American European policy would also fail. Secretary Forrestal added a note of caution, telling the President that the United States had just slightly more than two

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[148]Millis, Arms and Men, 288-90.

Army divisions in reserve, only one of which could be in Europe quickly. Truman concluded the discussion by saying, in Forrestal's words, ". . . our policy would remain fixed . . . we would stay in Berlin until all diplomatic means had been exhausted in order to come to some kind of an accommodation to avoid war."[149] On first reading, Truman seems to have made a firm statement, but much depends on what he meant by "until all diplomatic means had been exhausted." As one writer points out, "Diplomatic means would be exhausted if the Soviets simply said 'no' consistently over a period of time."[150]

It is quite possible that Forrestal misunderstood Truman or that the President's language was not precise enough. Writing a diary-type note to himself the evening of the meeting with the Secretary, Truman clearly stated that the United States would stay in Berlin, whatever happened. The strain of these days on the President is evident in the note:

July 19, 1948

> Have quite a day. See some politicos. A meeting with General Marshall and Jim Forrestal on Berlin and the Russian situation. Marshall states the facts and the condition with which we are faced. I made the decision ten days ago to stay in Berlin. Jim wants to hedge. . . . I insist we will stay in Berlin--come

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[149]Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 459.

[150]Davison, Berlin Blockade, 157.

what may.

Royall, Draper and Jim Forrestal came in later. I have to listen to a rehash of what I know already and reiterate my "Stay in Berlin" decision. I do not pass the buck, nor do I alibi out of any decision I make.

Went to Pershing's funeral in the marble amphitheatre. An impressive ceremony. . . .

Bess and Margaret went to Missouri at 7:30 EDT 6:30 God's time. I sure hated to see them go. Came back and read the papers, some history and then wrote this. It is hot and humid and lonely. . . .[151]

Truman apparently felt a need to talk to his field commander face to face about Berlin. He ordered General Clay and Robert Murphy, State Department adviser to Clay, to return to Washington for consultation. The President invited the General to attend the National Security Council meeting on July 22 with him, so that Clay might brief them on the German situation. Clay told the NSC that the airlift was working well, averaging 2500 tons of goods per day, but that additional aircraft would be required to bring in the coal necessary for the coming winter. He said the morale of the German people was high and they were determined to wait out the Soviet blockade. Clay then returned to the possibility of sending an armored convoy up the highway to Berlin. It was his opinion that it would be met by armed Soviet resistance.[152] But the General was not quite consistent, for he had dined with Forrestal the previous evening and told him that he

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[151]Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 140.

[152]Truman, Memoirs, II, 124-25.

believed that three weeks earlier he could have put through an armored convoy without difficulty and that he still believed it could be done.[153] Clay had, on July 10, cabled Washington a request for authority to force his way through the blockade, convinced that the Russians would not forecefully resist such a passage.[154]

The Air Force Chief, General Vandenberg, objected in the National Security Council meeting of July 22 to any further concentration of forces in Germany. Truman asked the General if he thought it better to send an armed force down the highway, thus precipitating World War III. Without giving Vandenberg a chance to answer, Truman said that the airlift was working and involved less risk than a convoy. He ordered the Air Force to ". . . furnish the fullest support possible to the problem of supplying Berlin."[155]

By September the Berlin airlift had expanded to the point where it could provide foodstuffs and most other

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[153]Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 459.

[154]Davison, Berlin Blockade, 126. Robert Murphy, a State Department representative who accompanied General Clay back from Germany, is quoted in Time magazine (June 1, 1970) as having said he regretted that he had not resigned at the time of the blockade as a protest. Murphy felt that the United States should have challenged the Soviet blockade "more vigorously."

[155]Truman, Memoirs, II, 125-26.

necessities of life without difficulty. However, bulk commodities, like coal, which would be needed in great quantities in the coming winter, would require additional aircraft. A review on Berlin in the National Security Council on September 9 disclosed that the diplomatic negotiations to end the blockade had broken down because of Soviet intransigence on all key points. In addition, the Russians announced they planned to hold ground and aerial training maneuvers in an area of East Germany that included the airlift corridors.[156] A meeting with the Secretary of Defense and other Pentagon leaders four days later left Truman despondent: "Berlin is a mess," he confided in a diary note that evening (September 13). "I have a terrible feeling . . . that we are very close to war. I hope not."[157]

Truman's somber estimates of the threat of war may have been colored by his own political problems; he was in the midst of a campaign for re-election which few thought he had a chance of winning. In any event, the Russians continued to make hostile gestures, but they always stopped short of actual armed contact.

The success of the airlift was an ever-increasing embarrassment to the Soviet government. The airlift

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[156] Ibid., 128.

[157] Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 141.

project, Clay reported to the NSC, was no longer an experiment, but a success which could be continued indefinitely. On October 22 General Clay received the authorization of the National Security Council and the Commander in Chief to add sixty-six more C-54 transports to his airlift.[158] Truman and the Security Council also approved appropriations to the Air Force for expansion of maintenance facilities and the procurement of new aircraft to offset the attrition caused by the airlift.[159]

Early in 1949 the Soviet Union began sending out diplomatic signals indicating a willingness to discuss an end to the Berlin blockade. Talks began between Philip Jessup and Jacob Malik, the American and Soviet representatives to the United Nations, in March of 1949. The end result was an agreement made public on May 4, announcing that the blockade would end as of May 12.[160] The détente had been made possible by Truman's resort to the only peaceful and honorable course left open to him, the dramatic and amazingly effective airlift. The Air Force could well boast, as Secretary Symington did, that "The

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[158]Davison, Berlin Blockade, 250; Truman, Memoirs, II, 129.

[159]Symington to Forrestal, November 24, 1948, RG340, S/AF, Vittles, folder (1), National Archives.

[160]Truman, Memoirs, II, 130-31. See also, Davison, Berlin Blockade, 270-71.

Berlin airlift is one of the great transportation achievements of all time."[161]

Truman's conduct in the Berlin blockade crisis showed him at his best; resolute but restrained. He rejected the direct military solution of testing the blockade with an armed convoy in favor of the airlift, which, for a time, only he seemed to believe could work. While Berlin, like Greece and Turkey and other lesser confrontations with the Soviet Union could be counted as victories for Truman's containment doctrine; it should be noted that all were achieved while the United States enjoyed a monopoly on nuclear weapons.[162] This monopoly ended four months after the Berlin blockade. Which is not to gainsay what Truman accomplished: he had taken a peaceful path and obtained his objective without appreciable compromise. That West Berlin still stands as a republican enclave in the center of a Soviet satellite is due largely to the firm leadership of Harry Truman. That Berlin still stands unnaturally divided is a mocking reminder in

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[161]Symington to Forrestal, November 20, 1948, RG340, S/AF, 031.1, National Archives.

[162]D(enna) F)rank) Fleming, "America's Responsibility," in Brian Tierney, Donald Kagan, and L. Pearce Williams (eds.), The Cold War--Who Is To Blame? (New York: Random House, 1967), 14-15. Hereinafter cited as Fleming, "America's Responsibility." See also, Glenn D. Paige, The Korean Decision, June 24-30, 1950 (New York: The Free Press, 1968), 54-55. Hereinafter cited as Paige, Korean Decision.

microcosm of the politico-military dichotomy of the world which began with Truman and his Soviet counterpart.

The Berlin blockade offers an excellent illustration of the great power inherent in the accepted modern concept of the commander in chief. At no time during the days of decision in the Berlin crisis, nor in the long months of tense confrontation with the Soviet Union, did the President consult with the legislative leaders. Not once did he ask authority from Congress to take action, nor request that they give legislative sanction to decisions he had made.[163] Truman was virtually without check. He could just as easily have ordered General Clay to send an armed convoy to Berlin and to meet force with force. The resulting bloodshed would have confronted the nation with a state of war, albeit undeclared. The exclusive power of the Congress to declare war is a largely-illusory constitutional check on the sweeping military power of the modern presidency.

In March 1948 Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg signed a collective self-defense treaty, called the Brussels Pact. This was a purely military agreement predicated on the principle that

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[163] O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 43.

an attack on one was an attack on all. The reasons for it, of course, were the events of the Cold War in Europe in 1947 and early 1948, particularly the Soviet-sponsored Communist takeover of the governments of Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Finland was under extreme pressure to enter into a "pact of friendship" with the Soviet Union. A general malaise existed in Western Europe occasioned by Communist pressure on the "free nations" which led directly to the formation of the Brussels Pact.[164]

Speaking to Congress at the time of the pact's signing, Truman called it ". . . a notable step in the direction of unity in Europe for the protection and preservation of its civilization."[165] The President told the Congress that the Brussels Pact deserved the full support of the United States. Then, in what was probably a trial balloon regarding American association with the pact, Truman said: "I am sure that the determination of the free countries of Europe to protect themselves will be

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[164]John W. Spanier, American Foreign Policy Since World War II (2nd rev. ed.; New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), 49-50. Hereinafter cited as Spanier, American Foreign Policy. U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Governmental Operations, Subcommittee on National Security and International Operations, The Atlantic Alliance--Basic Issues: A Study, Committee Print, 89 Cong., 2 Sess., 1966. Hereinafter cited as Atlantic Alliance--Basic Issues. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 243; Steinberg, Man From Missouri, 359.

[165]Item No. 52, Special Message to the Congress on the Threat to the Freedom of Europe, March 17, 1948, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1948, 184.

matched by an equal determination on our part to help them to protect themselves."[166] The President was aware that the military alliance between France, Britain and the Benelux nations did not constitute any genuine deterrent to Soviet ambition. Any effective military alliance for Europe was only possible with American participation. But here Truman was wary of American tradition: ". . . I always kept in mind the lesson of Wilson's failure in 1920. I meant to have legislative co-operation."[167]

What Truman hoped to do was to enlarge the Brussels Alliance by the inclusion of the United States and the nations of western Europe who were not yet members. This meant, of course, that he would eventually have to ask a generally-hostile Republican Senate to ratify American participation in an international military alliance. He was fortunate in that Arthur Vandenberg, a staunch believer in bipartisan foreign policy, was then chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Vandenberg, with the encouragement of Under Secretary of State Robert Lovett, agreed to try to obtain the prior

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[166] Ibid.

[167] Truman, Memoirs, II, 243.

consent of the Senate to the principle of such an alliance.[168]

The result of Vandenberg's efforts, Senate Resolution 239, was artfully led through the legislative process by the Senator to passage on a final roll call vote in which only four votes were recorded against it. Thus, on June 11, 1948, the Senate went on record as endorsing the participation of the United States in a regional collective security arrangement. The significant provisions of the resolution are noted below:

> (3) Association of the United States, by constitutional process, with such regional and other collective arrangement as are based oncontinuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, and as effect its national security.
> (4) Contributing to the maintenance of peace by making clear its determination to exercise the right of individual or collective self-defense . . . should any armed attack occur affecting its national security.[169]

With the resolution as security, Truman then initiated talks with other nations, that resulted, on

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[168]Ibid., 244; Acheson Testimony, U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Government Operations, Subcommittee on National Security and International Operations, Hearings, The Atlantic Alliance, 89 Cong., 2 Sess., (7 Parts; April 27 - August 15, 1966), Pt. 1, 9. Hereinafter cited as Atlantic Alliance Hearings.

[169]Text of Vandenberg Resolution is in Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), Truman Administration, 274-75; Watson, United States in the Contemporary World, 82-83. See also, Henry M. Jackson (ed.), The Atlantic Alliance: Jackson Subcommittee Hearings and Findings (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), 8. Hereinafter cited as Jackson (ed.), The Atlantic Alliance.

April 4, 1949, in a pact establishing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).[170] The President submitted the treaty to the Senate for approval on April 12, reminding them that the document was in accord with their resolution of the previous June and re-hashing the venerable argument that the way to lasting peace was through military might.[171] Lengthy hearings and floor debate followed. The most persistent question dealt with the power of the Commander in Chief to send troops abroad without congressional sanction in compliance with a military alliance. Administration leaders blocked an attempt by the Senate to stipulate on the matter.[172] The ratification vote came on July 21 with the treaty passing

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[170]The signatory nations were Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the United States. Spanier, American Foreign Policy, 50; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 266-67. For a detailed account of the negotiations that led to the NATO Treaty, see Truman, Memoirs, II, 244-50.

[171]Item No. 75, Special Message to the Senate Transmitting the North Atlantic Treaty, April 12, 1949, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1949, 206-207.

[172]O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 58. Senatorial efforts to check the Commander in Chief with respect to the NATO agreement are described in Powers of the President to Send the Armed Forces Outside the United States. The problem is also discussed in a column by Arthur Krock, "The Power of Congress to Declare War," New York Times, February 4, 1949, reprinted in Krock, In the Nation, 161-63. See also, Robert Taft, "A Conservative Opposes the Treaty," in Kaplan (ed.), NATO and the Policy of Containment, 18-22.

82-13. The ratification process was completed on August 24, 1949, and NATO began its formal existence.[173]

The American commitment to a peacetime military alliance was a unique and significant departure from established practice. It was an obvious extension and militarization of the Truman Doctrine. However, its value, particularly in the first years of its operation, was largely symbolic since it lacked sufficient arms, forces and coordination.[174] As Urs Schwarz has said, what the establishment of NATO recognized was ". . . the truth that military power had become a permanent corollary of foreign policy."[175]

Standing alone, the North Atlantic Treaty was, in Richard Leopold's words, ". . . a diplomatic gesture rather than a military bulwark."[176] The nations of Europe

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[173]Truman, Memoirs, II, 251; Spanier, American Foreign Policy. The text of the North Atlantic Treaty is officially published in U.S. Statutes at Large (63 Stat. 2241). The text is reprinted in Jackson (ed.), The Atlantic Alliance, 281-83; Kaplan (ed.) NATO and the Policy of Containment, 12-14; Watson (ed.), United States in the Contemporary World, 83-87.

[174]Leopold, "United States in World Affairs," 233. See also, Major Problems of United States Foreign Policy, 156-57; McLellan and Reuss, "Foreign and Military Policies," 61, 66-68; American Military History, 543.

[175]Schwarz, American Strategy, 135.

[176]Richard W. Leopold, The Growth of American Foreign Policy (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), 658. Hereinafter cited as Leopold, Growth of American Foreign Policy.

involved could act as little more than a tripwire in the face of an all-out Soviet movement westward. These nations could not meet even a conventional probe by Communist forces without significant military assistance from the United States. A program of military aid was an essential concomitant if NATO were to be anything more than a wall of paper.

The National Security Council recommended to the President that the request for military assistance appropriations for the NATO nations be combined with similar existing aid programs into one package for presentation to the Congress. The programs already in operation provided for the military equipment and troop-training assistance for Iran, Greece, Turkey, the Philippines, China, Korea, and several Latin American republics.[177] There was an obvious efficiency to combining all military aid into a unified program, but the administration was also concerned about the resistance in Congress to military aid to the NATO bloc. Accordingly, the tactic was to divorce the request for military assistance from the NATO treaty and tie it to a unified military aid request.[178]

Four days after the Senate advised favorably on the

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[177] American Military History, 543.

[178] McLellan and Reuss, "Foreign and Military Policies," 62; Hammond, "NSC-68," 283.

NATO Pact, Truman sent to Congress a request for a Mutual Defense Assistance Program (MDAP). The principal purpose of the bill was to provide the requisite military implementation of the NATO alliance. The President asked the Congress for $1.45 billion. The bulk of his request, $1.09 billion, was intended for Western Europe.[179] In his special message to Congress asking for MDAP, Truman said it was intended to provide compact, mobile defensive forces for nations whose security was vital to the national security of the United States. He acknowledged that the foreign forces envisioned by his program would provide the nations involved only with sufficient arms and equipment to resist internal disorder and ". . . resisting the initial phases of external aggression."[180] Truman recognized that the only genuine "deterrent to aggression" was still the military might of the United States, and said that no nation need fear that he would not use this power to prevent their being overrun.[181] The President told the Congress that the requirements for military aid had been unified under one program so that the distribution of American arms and equipment could be

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[179]Phillips, Truman Presidency, 269-70.

[180]Item No. 163, Special Message to the Congress on the Need for a Military Aid Program, July 25, 1949, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1949, 398.

[181]Ibid.

adapted to U.S. foreign policy and changing conditions.[182]

Many members of the Congress, appalled by the amount of the MDAP request, joined with the neo-isolationists, led by Senator Taft, in opposition to the President's request. One of Taft's strongest allies was Senator Vandenberg, a key figure in making NATO a reality. Vandenberg believed, as did Taft, that the bill was too costly and that it was ". . . almost unbelievable in its grant of unlimited power to the Chief Executive."[183] The President assigned to Dean Acheson, who had replaced Marshall as Secretary of State in January, the task of steering the MDAP bill through Congress.[184] The Congress battled over the bill the rest of the summer months and well into September; it seemed clear that Truman would have to accept major amendments in the amount and conditions for military aid in order to secure passage. But Truman's program and Acheson's task were both simplified by the Soviet Union. On September 23, 1949, the President made public the information that the U.S.S.R. had

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[182] Ibid., 399. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 251-53.

[183] Vandenberg is quoted in Acheson, Present at the Creation, 309.

[184] Ibid., 309ff. provides a thorough, if slightly slanted account of the struggle to get the bill through Congress.

successfully tested a nuclear device.[185] Impelled by the loss of the nuclear monopoly, solid majorities in both legislative houses approved the bill in less than a week, cutting the original request by only $100 million.[186]

The President signed the Mutual Defense Assistance Act of 1949[187] on October 6, describing it as ". . . a notable contribution to the collective security of the free nations of the world."[188] In an obvious reference to the Soviet atomic explosion, Truman also said at the bill-signing: "Recent developments in the field of armaments have strengthened the free nations in their adherence to the principle of a common defense . . . that underlies this act."[189] Truman made implementation of the

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[185]Item No. 216, Statement by the President on Announcing the First Atomic Explosion in the U.S.S.R., September 23, 1949, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1949, 485.

[186]Phillips, Truman Presidency, 270. See also, Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 360; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 313.

[187]The act is Public Law 329 (63 Stat. 714). A description of the principles involved in the act as passed and as amended in 1950, can be found in Major Problems of United States Foreign Policy, 121, 172-73.

[188]Item No. 225, Statement by the President Upon Signing the Mutual Defense Assistance Act, October 6, 1949, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1949, 500.

[189]Ibid.

act the responsibility of the Secretary of State.[190] However, the Department of the Army was given the duty of administering the Mutual Defense Program. In operation, each country that received MDAP-authorized arms and equipment had an American "Military Assistance Advisory Group" assigned to it. Each group was composed of Army, Air Force and Navy sections. The functions assigned to these groups have been described in the Army's official history: ". . . each advisory group assisted its host government in determining the amount and type of aid needed and helped train the armed forces . . . in the use and tactical employment of material received from the United States."[191]

It took more than a year for the NATO countries to come to agreement on the precise implementation of the principles they had approved in the North Atlantic Treaty. The difficulties centered around reaching accord on each nation's contribution to the common effort, the participation of West Germany in the alliance, and the

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[190] Truman to Acheson, November 23, 1949, RG165, USA, Plans and Operations 092, Case 66/5, National Archives. The Secretary of State's authority and the terms of administering the act were formalized by Truman in Executive Order 10099, January 27, 1950 (3 C.F.R., 1949-1953 Comp., 295). See also, Item No. 22, Statement by the President Upon Issuing Executive Order for Administering Mutual Defense Act, January 27, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 131-32.

[191] American Military History, 543.

amalgamation of national forces into a common "balanced force" for mutual defense. The outbreak of the Korean War impressed upon the NATO signatories the need of a functioning body to prevent a similar attack in Europe. A general agreement was finally hammered out by Secretary Acheson and the allied representatives on September 26, 1950, which established SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe).[192] One understanding reached by the NATO countries was that the supreme commander of the NATO forces was to be an American. And Truman knew just the American he wanted for the job.

To a note for General Eisenhower on October 19, 1950, Truman had added a handwritten postscript: "First time you're in town I wish you'd come see me. If I send for you we'll start the 'speculators' to work."[193] Eisenhower saw the President on October 28. Truman asked him to take supreme command of the NATO armies. The General accepted, Truman recalled, because he felt that bringing the nations of Europe together ". . . was a job

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[192]Truman has described the difficult negotiations leading to this agreement in his Memoirs, II, 252-57. See also, William T. R. Fox and Annette B. Fox, NATO and the Range of American Choice (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1967), 14-15. Hereinafter cited as Fox and Fox, NATO and the Range of American Choice.

[193]Truman to Eisenhower, October 19, 1950, Eisenhower Papers, PF/DDE, Truman folder (2), Eisenhower Library.

that very badly needed to be done."[194] Eisenhower's formal appointment was made by the President on December 19, 1950. The order gave the General full operational command of all American Army, Air Force and Naval Forces in the European theater, as well as designating him as Supreme Allied Commander, Europe. "You are undertaking a tremendous responsibility," Truman concluded in his order to Eisenhower. "As President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States, I know that our entire country is wholeheartedly behind you."[195] Truman might have thought twice about this prestigious appointment had he any way of knowing that in less than two years Eisenhower would be the Republican nominee, publicly damning the Korean military policies of his former commander in chief.

Six years after he left office, Truman told an interviewer that the conclusion of the NATO treaty gave him the greatest sense of personal satisfaction.[196] The ex-President wrote in his Memoirs that western Europe was

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[194]Truman, Memoirs, II, 257. See also, Fox and Fox, NATO and the Range of American Choice, 15. Officially, Eisenhower's title will be Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR).

[195]Truman to Eisenhower, December 19, 1950, Eisenhower Papers, PF/DDE, Truman Folder (2), Eisenhower Library.

[196]Phillips, "Truman at 75," 107.

secure largely because the United States was able to break with tradition during his administration and join a peacetime military alliance.[197] Subsequent events did not serve to shake his conviction that NATO is an important deterrent shield:

> Student: Mr. President, you said that during your administration the country moved from isolationism to internationalism. I would imagine that one of the ways you did this was by joining NATO. . . . Do you have any regrets about moving this nation quite so quickly into an organization like NATO?
> President Truman: I have not. NATO has been a very successful organization. It was one of the things that kept us out of a third world war. . . . It's working, and it's going to continue to work. When it quits working, we'll be in the third world war. Just keep that in mind.[198]

The test detonation of an atomic device by the Soviet Union had encouraged the Congress to pass the Mutual Defense Assistance Act substantially in the form Truman had requested. The Soviet test had also been a major factor in Truman's decision to authorize a crash program to develop the thermonuclear (hydrogen) bomb. There was another major development directly attributable to the successful Russian experiment: The drafting of a policy

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[197] Truman, Memoirs, II, 260-61.

[198] Truman Speaks, 14-15. In 1966, in a letter to Senate Sub-committee on National Security, Truman wrote: "It seems to me that there is continued need for NATO to guard against the use of force to resolve issues which remain 20 years after the war." Truman to Henry M. Jackson, July 26, 1966, quoted in Atlantic Alliance Hearings, Pt. 7, 227.

paper for Truman that would come to have a major influence on the military and foreign policy thinking of the American government. The paper had its beginning in a report dated January 31, 1950, dealing with recommendations to the President in light of the end of the American atomic monopoly.[199] One of the recommendations made then was that the President order the State and Defense departments to make a detailed examination of American objectives in both war and peace. They should also assess the effect that those objectives have on strategic planning now that the Soviet Union had a ". . . probable fission bomb capability and possible thermonuclear bomb capability. . . ."[200] The President accepted this recommendation and when he signed the directive ordering the acceleration of the hydrogen bomb program on January 30, 1950, he appended to it a letter ordering the Secretaries of State and Defense to make this reassessment of defense and foreign policy.[201]

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[199]The recommendations to Truman have been discussed at length in Chapter IV, supra.

[200]Lilienthal, Atomic Energy Years, 624.

[201]Hammond, "NSC-68," 290-92. See also, Phillips, Truman Presidency, 305-306; Paige, Korean Decision, 58; American Military History, 544; Rostow, United States in the World Arena, 224-25; Schwarz, American Strategy, 135. Another factor leading to this assessment was the loss of mainland China to the Communist forces late in 1949. However, the prime motive appears to have been the Soviet atomic bomb. See O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 32.

The staff studies that followed eventually produced a "white paper" titled NSC-68 (National Security Council Policy Paper No. 68). The paper began by recognizing that events since World War II had brought about a basic realignment among nations, with the United States and the Soviet Union forming the terminals of an international polarization. NSC-68 discounted the existence of a Communist "master plan," but did conclude that the Soviet government had three major objectives:

> (1) to preserve the internal power position of the regime and develop the U.S.S.R. as the base for that power;
> (2) to consolidate control over the Soviet satellites and add them as support for that base;
> (3) to weaken any opposing centers of power and aspire to world hegemony.[202]

American objectives of individual freedom and self-determination constituted a threat to the three objectives of the Soviet Union. There existed a basic incompatibility between the two systems of government. The assumption was then made that a continuous assault upon the United States and other democratic nations was in prospect, since force was an accepted means of obtaining Communist political objectives. America must be willing to preserve its avowed principles both at home and abroad, no matter what the cost. This should be accomplished by peaceful means, but should these means fail, the nation

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[202]Hammond, "NSC-68," 304-305.

should be willing and prepared to wage war to preserve those conditions under which this form of government can survive and prosper.[203]

The paper next analyzed the relative military capabilities of both nations and their respective allies in the event of war. The Russians would have sufficient atomic weapons and an adequate delivery system by 1954. The effect of this would be to negate the deterrant value of American atomic weapons, bringing about an atomic stalemate. In a recourse to conventional warfare, the Soviet Union had substantial superiority. The United States and its Western allies were inadequately prepared for limited warfare because of low troop levels, weakness in the military and economic structure of western European nations and a lack of strength in the Western alliance system.[204]

The document described for the President four possible courses of action: (1) a continuation of the present policy course of limited defense budgets with the same commitments and military capabilities; (2) a preventive war against the Soviet Union; (3) withdrawal from international commitments and acceptance of the "fortress America" strategy; (4) development of the conventional war

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[203]Phillips, Truman Presidency, 306.

[204]Hammond, "NSC-68," 306.

deterrent potentional of the free world by a massive buildup of the American military forces as well as those of the allied nations to the point where they were capable of responding to each new Communist challenge quickly and decisively.[205] The NSC-68 drafters, who obviously endorsed the fourth option, deliberately avoided making any cost estimates in the paper itself, but in their discussions estimates had ranged from $3 to $35 billion over Truman's current ceiling of $15 billion. But the paper did indicate a belief that even in time of peace a military budget totalling up to twenty percent of the gross national product was possible without bringing about national bankruptcy.[206]

The Secretaries of Defense and State signed the document and submitted it to Truman on April 7, 1950. Five days later, the President sent the policy paper to the National Security Council (where it acquired the designation "NSC-68"). The President instructed the Council to work out a program based on the fourth option and present him with cost estimates for its implementation. Truman had not approved NSC-68 as the new national military

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[205] Ibid., 306-307; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 307.

[206] Paige, Korean Decision, 59; Hammond, "NSC-68," 306. For a general outline of the document, which is still classified as a state secret, see Acheson, Present at the Creation, 374-76.

policy, he simply committed it to his staff for further study.[207] Before the difficult task of translating the generalized principles of NSC-68 were completed, war broke out in Korea.

The value of NSC-68 was that it provided a framework within which the build-up of strength to meet the demands of the Korean conflict were considered. It provided the rationale which rejected the strategy of those who urged total war in Korea. NSC-68 was an important milestone for overall military defense planning because it established, in Paul Hammond's phrase ". . . some kind of order of priority and magnitude between economy and security, domestic and foreign commitments, economic and military means, American and allied strength, and short and long-run national interests."[208] But, while it did clarify the policies employed infighting that war, NSC-68's warning that the nation must be prepared to fight limited, conventional wars came too late to prevent the initial military defeat suffered by the United States in the opening months of the Korean War.

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[207]Hammond, "NSC-68," 330. Cabell Phillips would appear to be in error when he says that Truman approved the paper in April, 1950, and it then became "official government policy." Truman Presidency, 308.

[208]Hammond, "NSC-68," 363. See also, Rostow, United States in the World Arena, 224; O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 32.

# TRUMAN AS COMMANDER IN CHIEF: A STUDY OF PRESIDENT HARRY S. TRUMAN'S CONCEPT AND EXERCISE OF THE MILITARY FUNCTION OF THE PRESIDENCY, 1945-1953.

VOLUME II

A Dissertation

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## CHAPTER VII

## THE DECISION TO INTERVENE IN KOREA

> This is the Greece of the Far East. If we are tough enough now, there won't be any next step.[1]

Korea, destined to become the arena of a serious East-West conflict, is a mountainous peninsula jutting out from the land mass of Asia. The Sea of Japan to the east, the Yellow Sea to the west and the Korea Strait to the south wash against its more than 5,400 miles of coast line. To the north, the Yalu and Tumen Rivers form the natural common boundaries shared with China (500 miles) and Russia (only eleven miles). The Korean peninsula, encompassing some 85,000 square miles, varies from 90 to 200 miles in width and from 525 to 600 miles in length.[2]

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[1]Truman, quoted in Beverly Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," Saturday Evening Post, CCXXIV (November 10, 1951), 80. Hereinafter cited as Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea."

[2]Roy E. Appleman, South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu, June-November, 1950, in Stetson Conn (genl. ed.), United States Army in the Korean War (Washington, 1961), 1. Hereinafter cited as Appleman, South to the Naktong.

The first American military assistance to Korea arrived in 1888, in the form of U.S. Army personnel sent to train the Korean forces.[3] This aid was a result of a "treaty of friendship" signed at Tientsin in 1882 between the United States and Korea, then under the suzerainity of China. The peninsula was a focal point in power struggles between Russia, Japan and China throughout the next quarter-century which culminated with Japan establishing dominion over Korea by 1905.[4] "We can not possibly interfere for the Koreans against Japan," President Theodore Roosevelt said in January 1905. "They couldn't strike one blow in their own defense."[5] The Taft-Katsura "agreed memorandum" of July 27, 1905, put the United States on record as accepting Japanese suzerainity over Korea. When Japan formally annexed Korea in August, 1910, the United States offered no objection.[6]

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[3]Walter G. Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, in Stetson Conn (genl. ed.), United States Army in the Korean War (Washington, 1966), 3. Hereinafter cited as Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front.

[4]William L. Langer (ed.), An Encyclopedia of World History (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1952), 886-87. Hereinafter cited as Langer (ed.), Encyclopedia of World History. See also, Matthew B. Ridgway, The Korean War (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1967), 5-6. Hereinafter cited as Ridgway, Korean War.

[5]Quoted in Leopold, Growth of American Foreign Policy, 271.

[6]Ibid.; Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 3.

From 1910 until 1945 Japan retained its control over Korea. That control was imperiled by the Cairo Declaration of December 1943, in which China, The United States and the United Kingdom pledged that "in due course" Korea would become a free, independent nation. A reaffirmation of this promise was made in the Potsdam Declaration, issued on July 26, 1945. When the Soviet Union declared war on Japan on August 8, it became a party to this guarantee.[7] The atomic-bombings on the sixth and the ninth, coupled with the entry of Russia into the war, forced Japan to sue for peace. While the negotiations were being carried out, armies of the Soviet Union prepared to enter the Korean peninsula.[8]

The President received a good deal of encouragement from numerous sources, urging him to order American forces into all of Korea to accept the surrender of the Japanese Army and to act as an occupation force. The State Department urged this action on Truman. He also received separate cables from Ambassadors Averell Harriman and Edwin O. Pauley advising him to block Soviet intentions by

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[7]U.S., Department of State, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, State Dept. Publication No. 3922, Far Eastern Series 34 (Washington, 1950), Intro., ix. Hereinafter cited as United States Policy in the Korean Crisis. See also, Ridgway, Korean War, 7; Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 4; Warren, President as World Leader, 335.

[8]Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 4.

having the United States Army occupy as much of Korea and Manchuria as possible.[9] However, physical conditions dictated otherwise. The Soviet forces were already in Manchuria and nearing the Korean border which they would cross on August 12. There were no American forces in Korea, the closest units being on Okinawa, with very little shipping available to transport them to the peninsula. The Joint Chiefs of Staff informed the President that any attempt to race the Russian Army for territory in Korea was doomed from the outset by the logistics of the situation.[10] The War Department recommended that an arbitrary dividing line, the thirty-eighth parallel of north latitude, should be suggested to the Soviet Union as an operational and occupational division between the Russian and American forces. The Army planners reasoned that acceptance of this line would operate to the advantage of the United States. The Russians were in a position to take all of Korea if they chose to, since the XXIV Corps assigned to occupy Korea was at Okinawa, 600

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[9]Martin Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," in Harold Stein (ed.), American Civil-Military Decisions: A Book of Case Studies (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1963), 576. Hereinafter cited as Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back." See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 317; Trumbull Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur: A Precis in Limited War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), 5. Hereinafter cited as Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur.

[10]Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 576.

miles away. On August 14 the Joint Chiefs accepted this recommendation, as did the State Department, and it was forwarded to the President, who also approved.[11]

While the status of Korea remained questionable, the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC) began drafting a directive on August 11 for General Douglas MacArthur, prescribing the procedures to be followed in accepting the surrender of all Japanese forces in the Far East. MacArthur, who was Commander in Chief, U.S. Army Forces, Pacific, had been designated by Truman as Supreme Commander, Allied Powers, Japan (SCAP), a selection endorsed on August 12 by all the Allied powers.[12] By August 15 SWNCC had completed the drafting of the orders to MacArthur and they had received the President's approval. The orders included the proposal to establish the

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[11]Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 4-5; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 576; Truman, Memoirs, I, 445; II, 317. For the background of events which led to the selection of the thirty-eighth parallel as a dividing line, see Appleman, South to the Naktong, 2-3.

[12]Because of Soviet intransigence in the European settlements, Truman had decided that he "would not allow the Russians any part in the control of Japan." On the way back from Potsdam he decided to give complete control of Japan to MacArthur. Truman, Memoirs, I, 412, 432-33. See also, Item No. 100, Press Conference, August 14, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 216. Frazier Hunt, eulogistic biographer of General MacArthur, claims that Truman chose the General because he had "not yet" succumbed to the envy and hatred of MacArthur nurtured by certain "leftist groups" in the White House, State Department and Pentagon. See Untold Story of MacArthur, 399.

thirty-eighth parallel as a line of demarcation.[13]

The directive to MacArthur, known officially as General Order No. 1, was transmitted to him on August 15. The text of General Order No. 1 was also submitted to Premier Stalin for his approval on the 15th. The following day, August 16, the Soviet leader cabled his approval, without taking exception to the provisions regarding Korea.[14] These provisions stipulated that the Japanese troops in Korea north of the thirty-eighth parallel should surrender to the Soviet Army and those south of that line to the American Army. The United States did not intend to create fixed zones of occupation, as in Germany, by asking that the thirty-eighth parallel be used as a divider. The line was considered temporary; a military expedient made necessary by extant conditions.[15]

General MacArthur caused General Order No. 1 to be promulgated on September 2, 1945. Six days later, the XXIV Corps arrived in Korea and the following day Japanese forces south of the parallel formally surrendered to Lt.

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[13]Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 576.

[14]Ibid.; Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 4-5. The full text of General Order No. 1 is printed in Feis, Contest over Japan, Appendix 5, 165-66.

[15]United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, Intro., ix. See also, Truman, Memoirs, I, 444; Appleman, South to the Naktong, 3; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 5.

General John R. Hodge, commander of the XXIV, who was designated as U.S. Commander for (South) Korea. The Soviet Army, which had advanced beyond the thirty-eighth parallel, occupying the cities of Seoul and Inchon, retired to the dividing line without incident.[16] The demarcation line quickly became a permanent border. General Hodge and his Russian counterpart became de facto military rulers of their respective halves of the peninsula. Hodge started off on the wrong foot with the Korean people by announcing on September 9 that the Japanese civilian officials controlling the government would be temporarily retained in their posts. The clamor in the United States and Korea was strong and immediate. Truman had to order the JCS to send Hodge a countermanding directive and issued a public statement assuring that the "Japanese warlords are being removed," but cautioning that full independence for Korea would require "time and patience."[17]

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[16]Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 576-77. Dr. Syngman Rhee, long a Korean nationalist leader, and soon to be president of his country, had wired Truman on August 22, imploring him to intervene rapidly in order to insure a, ". . . united, democratic, independent Korea." Telegram, Rhee to Truman, August 22, 1945, Truman Papers, OF, 471 Misc., Truman Library.

[17]Item No. 136, Statement by the President of the Liberation of Korea, September 18, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 324-25. Truman's statement was actually written by Dean Acheson, then Acting Secretary of State. See Acheson to Truman, September 14, 1945, Truman Papers, OF, 471 (1945-48), Truman Library.

A growing resentment of the United States arose among the Koreans during the latter months of 1945. The Korean people were beginning to realize that the dividing line was a permanent partition of their land, for which they blamed the United States.[18] Soviet authorities vigorously patrolled the thirty-eighth parallel, severely restricting passage between the zones. Hodge was frustrated in his persistent efforts to negotiate with his Russian counterpart on arrangements for reestablishing Korean unity. The General sent a message to the Joint Chiefs in December which was forwarded to Truman, reporting on the first three months in his command. Hodge said that the dual occupation of Korea "imposed an impossible condition" on any sincere efforts at achieving the assigned missions of stabilizing the economy and preparing Korea for full independence. Hodge recommended that the Allied governments reiterate their promise of complete independence for Korea and demonstrate sincerity by removing the barrier imposed by the thirty-eighth parallel. As an alternative, Hodge suggested that the United States and the Soviet Union remove their forces simultaneously, ". . . and leave Korea to its own devices and an inevitable

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[18]Truman, Memoirs, I, 521-22; II, 317-18. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 577.

internal upheaval for its self-purification."[19]

As an alternative to Hodge's recommendations, the President instructed Secretary of State Byrnes to take up the independence of Korea in a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union, held at Moscow in December, 1945. Out of these negotiations came the Moscow Agreement which provided that the American and Soviet commands in Korea should establish a Joint Commission. This body was to be charged with making recommendations for the establishment of a provisional government for all of Korea, following consultation with the leadership of the various political parties and social organizations. The Moscow Agreement was never put into effect. The United States and the Soviet Union were unable or unwilling to make mutually-acceptable accommodations that would have made the reunification and full independence of Korea possible.[20] The result of this impasse was that an artificial and illogical line became a permanent international boundary,

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[19] Truman, Memoirs, II, 317-18. General Hodge reported in February, 1946, that he was convinced that the Soviet Union had no intention of pulling out until U.S. forces left. He also complained that the State Department was not considering the information and recommendations he sent in. See diary entry, February 15, 1946, Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 135.

[20] United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, Intro., x; Truman, Memoirs, II, 318-20.

cruelly dividing a racially and ethnically homogeneous people into separate, hostile nations.

The political stalemate regarding Korea continued throughout 1946. In June of that year, the President received an informative report from Ambassador Pauley, who as Truman's personal representative, was one of the few Americans allowed to visit North Korea by Soviet officials. Pauley reported that the Soviet armies displayed no immediate intention of pulling out of North Korea. The Soviets were, in the Ambassador's view, clearly stalling on creating a provisional government for a united Korea, while at the same time engaging in an intensive propaganda campaign extolling the Soviet form of government and promoting the interests of the Korean Communist Party. Pauley recommended to Truman that the United States resort to similar tactics, propagandizing "to sell democracy and the four freedoms." He also recommended that the United States publicly condemn the Soviet Union for its failure to implement the Moscow Agreement and take the question to the United Nations or a Big Four summit conference.[21]

In responding to Pauley's letter, Truman outlined

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[21]Pauley to the President, June 22, 1946, RG107, OSA, 091 Korea (1946-1947), National Archives. Text of this letter is partially reprinted in Truman, Memoirs, II, 320-22.

his basic thinking on post-war Korean policy:

> I have given further consideration to your informative letter of June 22, 1946, on the Korean situation. I agree with you that Korea is, as you so aptly phrase it, "an ideological battleground upon which our entire success in Asia may depend." Korea has been for many decades the focus of international rivalries and I consider one of the principal objectives of our policy there to be to prevent Korea from again becoming the source of future conflict.
>
> . . . I believe that the most effective way to meet the situation in Korea is to intensify and persevere in our present efforts to build up a self-governing and democratic Korea, neither subservient to nor menacing any power.
>
> . . . We intend to carry on an informational and educational campaign to sell to the Koreans our form of democracy. . . .
>
> Our commitments for the establishment of an independent Korea require that we stay in Korea long enough to see the job through and that we have adequate personnel and sufficient funds to do a good job. I am, therefore, requesting the agencies concerned to see that means are found to insure that General Hodge has the men and funds he needs to attain our objectives.[22]

Truman's letter to Pauley caused the War Department to plan a program of increased military assistance to Korea, designed to implement the policies suggested by the President. On August 12 Truman wrote to Secretary of War Patterson to indicate his "particular interest" in the aid program. Truman assured Patterson that if the plan required additional funds, the Secretary could count on his support. The President also informed Patterson that he

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[22]Truman to Pauley, July 16, 1946, RG107, OSA, 091 Korea (1946-1947), National Archives.

had asked the State and Navy departments to assist in the accomplishment of this program. Truman repeated the belief expressed in his letter to Pauley: "I am convinced that we may be required to stay in Korea a considerable length of time in order to fulfill our pledge to aid in the establishment of a free and independent government."[23] In his reply, Patterson assured the President that the War Department would do its utmost in working toward the attainment of American objectives in the Far East.[24] By June, 1950, the United States had provided the Republic of Korea over $57 million in military equipment. Total economic assistance in the period between the end of World War II and the inception of the Korean War amounted to over $495 million.[25]

Early in 1947 it became apparent that the issue of Korean unification was completely stalemated by the failure of the United States and the Soviet Union to find a common

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[23]Truman to the Secretary of War (Patterson), August 12, 1946, RG107, OSA (Patterson), 091 Korea, National Archives.

[24]Patterson to Truman, August 29, 1946, ibid.

[25]"Facts on Korean Military Aid Debunking the '$200 charge'." (Unsigned Study), Files of David D. Lloyd, Truman Papers, Speech on Korean War Situation, Sept. 1, 1950, Truman Library. LaFeber's charge that military assistance "had scarcely begun" by June, 1950, is contradicted by the above document, which cites information received from the Senate Armed Services Committee. America, Russia, and the Cold War, 95.

ground for agreement.[26] General Hodge was concerned enough about the attitude of the Russians to warn Washington that he ". . . might be faced with a serious military situation at any time."[27] The General had already warned Truman, in January and again in February, 1947, that a civil war between North and South Korea was in the offing if the two occupying powers could not find a solution.[28] On the basis of Hodge's warnings the Joint Chiefs of Staff decided to warn MacArthur, the Far East Commaner, that he faced ". . . a possible critical military situation in Korea."[29] Late in May the United States made a final attempt to achieve a diplomatic accord through the Russo-American Joint Commission. These negotiations continued for several months, but they proved fruitless.[30]

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[26]Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 577.

[27]Benjamin F. Taylor, May 13, 1947 (Memorandum for Record), RG165, USA, 091-Korea, National Archives.

[28]Truman, Memoirs, II, 322. Truman met with his field commander for the first time in a conference at the White House in February, arranged by Secretary of War Patterson. See Patterson to Truman, February 19, 1947, Truman Papers, OF, 471 (1945-48), Truman Library.

[29]Benjamin F. Taylor, May 13, 1947 (Memorandum for Record), RG165, USA, 091-Korea, National Archives.

[30]Truman, Memoirs, II, 323-24. See also, Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 374. In a move towards self-government (and in response to Korean criticism), the U.S. Military Government established the South Korean Interim Government on May 17, 1947. See Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3362.

In May 1947 Secretary of War Patterson, concerned over the severe cutbacks in personnel necessitated by budgetary limitations on military spending, recommended to Secretary of State Marshall that his department consider the advisability of withdrawing all American forces from Korea. Marshall and Truman were not ready to take such a step in May, but with the failure of diplomatic efforts in the Joint Commission meetings in September, the President ordered the Joint Chiefs to study and make recommendations on the withdrawal question.[31] The JCS study was submitted on September 25, 1947. It was their opinion that, ". . . from the standpoint of military security, the United States had little strategic interest in maintaining the present troops and bases in Korea. . . ."[32] The Joint Chiefs defended this conclusion by saying that the 45,000 men in Korea were a military liability: They could not resist an attack without heavy reinforcements; an American offensive operation in Asia would bypass the Korean peninsula; the Korean force was expensive to maintain, yet contributed little of lasting value to American security; given current military manpower shortages, the forces

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[31]Admirals Leahy and Nimitz and Generals Eisenhower and Spaatz comprised the membership of the JCS at the time.

[32]Forrestal to Marshall, September 26, 1947, Truman Papers, OF, 1285 (Feb. 1952-1953), Truman Library.

could be used more profitably elsewhere.[33] MacArthur agreed with this estimate. In fact, he believed that anyone who advocated fighting a land war in Asia was demented.[34] General Albert C. Wedemeyer, who had been sent to study the Far Eastern situation by the President in the summer of 1947, reported substantially the same conclusions as the Joint Chiefs reached. However, he also recommended that the United States endeavor to strengthen the Korean military forces prior to withdrawal, since they would surely fall to the far superior North Korean Army otherwise.[35]

The failure of the Joint Commission to reach agreement on Korean unification and independence, particularly the Soviet rejection of a seven-point proposal submitted by the United States in late August, led Truman to conclude that it would be futile to continue direct negotiations with the Soviet Union. Therefore he directed the Secretary of State to place the question of Korean

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[33]Ibid. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 325-26; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 577; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 7-8; John W. Spanier, The Truman-MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1965), 16-19. Hereinafter cited as Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy.

[34]Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 17; Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 375.

[35]Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 7. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 577.

independence before the General Assembly of the United Nations.[36] Marshall addressed the General Assembly on September 17, 1947. He acknowledged that the Russian and American representatives in the Joint Commission had been unable to agree on the means of implementing a process leading to the independence promised to Korea at Cairo in 1943. After summarizing the vain efforts to achieve agreement, the Secretary said: "It appears evident that further attempts to solve the Korean problem by means of bilateral negotiations will only serve to delay the establishment of an independent, united Korea."[37] Marshall proposed that the occupying forces hold elections in their respective zones of Korea. The elections should be supervised by a United Nations Commission, which would also assist in the formation of the central government thus elected. Following this, Marshall suggested, the new government should arrange for the prompt withdrawal of the American and Soviet forces.[38]

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[36]Truman, Memoirs, II, 324. See also, Korea, 1945 to 1948: A Report on Political Developments and Economic Resources with Selected Documents (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), 47-48. Hereinafter cited as Korea, 1945 to 1948.

[37]Marshall, Address to the General Assembly on the Problem of Korean Independence, September 17, 1947, excerpted in Korea, 1945 to 1948, 47-48.

[38]Leopold, Growth of American Foreign Policy, 678.

Through the Joint Commission, the Russians offered a substitute proposal which called for the withdrawal of all foreign military forces from Korea very early in 1948. The Koreans were to be left to their own devices in structuring a unified government. However, Truman was aware from Wedemeyer's report and other intelligence information, that the North Korean Army had been very well-equipped and trained by the Soviet Union and that the constabulary forces of the South Koreans would be no match for them. Although it was this fear that South Korea would be at the mercy of North Korea which motivated rejection of the Soviet proposal on October 18, the State Department informed the Russians that the United States could not enter into a bilateral agreement on troop withdrawal while the larger question of Korean independence was before the United Nations.[39] With the Soviet bloc objecting and abstaining, on November 14, 1947, the UN General Assembly voted 43 to 0 to hold legislative elections in all of Korea for a National Assembly which would then form a national government for Korea. The General Assembly resolution, which followed closely the recommendations made by the United States, provided that the elections should be held no later than March 31, 1948.

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[39] Korea, 1945 to 1948, 6-7. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 324-25; DeConde, History of American Foreign Policy, 703-704.

[39] Korea, 1945 to 1948, 6-7.
, II, 324-25; DeConde, Hist

Supervision of the elections was to be carried out by a nine-nation, United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea. "Upon the establishment of a National Government," the General Assembly resolution read, "that Government should . . . arrange with the occupying powers for the complete withdrawal from Korea of their armed forces as soon as practicable and, if possible, within 90 days."[40] Shortly after the vote, Louise Kim, Korean Peoples Assembly Representative to the United Nations, wrote to the President expressing ". . . the heartfelt thanks of the Korean people for your government's successful efforts on behalf of Korea at the United Nations."[41]

The UN Temporary Commission was refused access to North Korea by the Red Army. It had to content itself with supervising elections held in the American zone in May 1948. Syngman Rhee's party captured a majority of the seats. On June 25 the Temporary Commission on Korea certified to the United Nations that the election had been "a valid expression of the free will of the electorate."[42] On July 17 Korea adopted a constitution, and on July 20

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[40]Text of the main provision of the resolution is quoted in Korea, 1945 to 1948, 9. See also, Leopold, Growth of American Foreign Policy, 678.

[41]Kim to Truman, November 18, 1947, Truman Papers, OF, 471 (1945-48), Truman Library.

[42]Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3362. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 577-78.

Syngman Rhee became President. Rhee informed General Hodge on August 11 that his government was prepared to take control, and the General, responding on the same date, told him that the American Military Government was prepared to transfer all responsibility to the new regime.[43] In a statement issued through the State Department on August 12, Truman recognized the Rhee Government as the "Government of Korea" and named John J. Muccio as his Special Representative, with the personal rank of Ambassador.[44] The State Department release implied that the new government was the government for all Korea, but neither the President nor the State Department could have seriously believed Rhee would govern above the thirty-eighth parallel. In fact, in a warm letter of congratulations to General Hodge on August 15, Truman wrote of the "constitutional government of southern Korea."[45] The formal transfer of

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[43]Rhee to Hodge and reply, August 11, 1948, printed in Korea, 1945 to 1948, Annex 21, 22, 98-100. See also, Leopold, Growth of American Foreign Policy, 678; Truman, Memoirs, II, 327.

[44]Korea, 1945 to 1948, 19-20, 100-101; Truman, Memoirs, II, 327-28. Muccio began an exemplary period of service as U.S. representative to Korea with this appointment. President Rhee was quite pleased with him. Less than a month after the appointment, Rhee will tell Truman that, "Muccio has already proved himself a genuine friend of Korea. . . ." Rhee to Truman, September 8, 1948, Truman Papers, OF, 471 (1945-48), Truman Library.

[45]Truman to Hodge, August 15, 1948, Truman Papers, OF, 471, Truman Library.

authority was completed in a ceremony on August 15 creating the "Republic of Korea."[46] American military authority ended with this transfer of power.

In the spring of 1948, during the formative period of the new Republic of Korea, the National Security Council was studying the future military relationship of the United States to that nation for the President. The Council informed Truman that several courses of action were open: Abandonment of Korea; continuation of American political and military responsibility; extension of U.S. military training, equipment and assistance to Korea's security forces, as well as extensive economic aid to the burgeoning nation. The Security Council recommended the latter option to the President, which he approved.[48] Thus, when Korea became an independent nation in August, it was the avowed policy of the United States to militarily and economically assist the new Republic,

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[46]Truman, Memoirs, II, 328. In a counter-move, the Soviet officials ordered an election on August 25. On September 9, the "Democratic People's Republic of Korea" was established with Kim Il Sung as President. This government, which was immediately recognized by the Soviet Union, claimed it had jurisdiction over all of Korea. Thus, there were two governments on the Korean peninsula, both claiming they spoke for all of Korea. As Richard Leopold wrote: ". . . the outlook for peaceful coexistence was dim." Growth of American Foreign Policy, 678. See also, Appleman, South to the Naktong, 5.

[47]Truman, Memoirs, II, 328.

[48]Ridgway, Korean War, 7.

but to consider it outside of the U.S. defensive shield.

The American Embassy in Moscow received a diplomatic note from the Soviet Foreign Office on September 19, 1948, with the information that Red Army forces would be completely withdrawn from Korea by the end of December, 1948.[49] The Soviet Union would meet this timetable. The U.S. Army had withdrawn about 29,000 soldiers from Korea by December, 1948. However, the State Department and President Rhee opposed any further rapid withdrawal. Their reasons were simply that the South Korean Army was not ready to perform its primary functions of preserving internal security and preventing external (Communist) aggression. So it was that at the end of 1948, while all Soviet Army personnel had left North Korea, 16,000 American troops were still stationed in South Korea.[50]

On New Years' Day, 1949, the White House announced that the United States was now according full diplomatic recognition to the Republic of Korea. The statement was a legal technicality, necessary to officially terminate the military occupation and relieve the Army of responsibility for administering economic assistance programs for

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[49]Korea, 1945 to 1948, 22.

[50]Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 8.

Korea.[51] On March 22, 1949, the National Security Council reported to Truman on a review of the Korean military situation. Based on this study, Truman issued orders the next day, directing that all U.S. forces remaining in Korea be withdrawn.[52] The President had already agreed that the United States would provide support for a 65,000-man army in South Korea. When the withdrawal of American forces was completed, June 29, 1949, a 500-man regimental combat team remained behind to supervise the training of the Korean army.[53] The President had acted on the unanimous advice of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the National Security Council in removing all forces from Korea. General MacArthur's opinion had also been solicited, and he had agreed that withdrawal was advisable.

In 1951, during the hearings on his dismissal, General MacArthur charged that the withdrawal of American forces from Korea in 1949 was a grievous error. The

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[51]Item No. 1, White House Statement Announcing Recognition of the Government of Korea, January 1, 1949, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1949, 1. See also, Ray T. Maddocks to Chief of Staff (Bradley), December 23, 1948, RG165, USA, 091 Korea, National Archives.

[52]Appleman, South to the Naktong, 5; Truman, Memoirs, II, 329.

[53]Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 8. See also, Appleman, South to the Naktong, 5; Rostow, United States in the World Arena, 234; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 8-9; Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 2008, 2112-13; Pt. 4, 2576, 2596; Pt. 5, 3362, 3571.

heated controversy over MacArthur's firing obscured the fact that he had endorsed this action. In February of 1949 Secretary of the Army Royall reported to Truman that in a conversation with the General he had urged a prompt removal of troops from Korea.[54] In the report requested by the Joint Chiefs in March, MacArthur had again approved withdrawal, adding that ". . . the training and combat readiness of the new security forces of the Korean Republic had reached such a level that complete withdrawal . . . was justified and would not adversely effect our position in Korea."[55] Meeting in Tokyo with junketing Congressmen on September 5, MacArthur told them, "South Korea is in no danger of being overrun by North Korea."[56] The citation below is from MacArthur's testimony taken during the dismissal hearings, wherein he attempted to disassociate himself from any connection with the removal decision:

> Senator Smith. . . . prior to the outbreak of the war in Korea, you did not have general jurisdiction over Korea in any way.
>
> General MacArthur. No, sir; I had no jurisdiction whatsoever over Korea. . . . I had nothing whatsoever to do with the policies, the administration, or the command responsibilities in Korea until the war broke out.

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[54]Truman, Memoirs, II, 329.

[55]Ibid. See also, Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 2113; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 9.

[56]Allen Moreland to Deputy Chief of Staff (Greunther), September 5, 1949 (Memorandum of Conversation), RG165, USA, 091 China, Case 35, National Archives.

> Senator Smith. Did you have anything to do with the policy that withdrew your troops or our troops from Korea prior to the outbreak of the war?
> General MacArthur. That decision was made in Washington.
> Senator Smith. That decision was made in Washington; it had nothing to do with you or your command there?
> General MacArthur. The troops were a part of my command at the time; they were the Twenty-fourth Corps.[57]

Later in his testimony, General MacArthur responded as follows to questions on troop withdrawal:

> Senator Morse. . . . Did you join in any recommendation to withdraw those troops from South Korea?
> General MacArthur. I concurred in it.
> Senator Morse. Do you think that was a mistake? I don't mean to give you a hindsight question.
> General MacArthur. In the aftermath and hindsight, I should say it was a very grave mistake.
>
> . . . .
>
> Senator Morse. . . . you concurred in the decision to withdraw, were you asked for a recommendation?
> General MacArthur. I don't recall. I think that the thing reached me in the form of a suggested action, and that suggested action was the withdrawal; and I concurred; but I do not recollect, Senator. I would have to look back in the files.[58]

The decision of the Truman Administration to withdraw from Korea left that nation vulnerable to attack. In the cold light of power politics and the planning for

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[57] Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 37.

[58] Ibid., 242-43. Senator Wayne Morse (Repub., Oregon) was the questioner. In the several thousand pages of testimony Morse emerges as the one Senator who remained entirely objective and was also the only one to be consistently and fully prepared to intelligently examine the issues raised.

global, not limited, war, Korea was of no strategic importance to the United States. While efforts were sincerely made to bolster the Republic of Korea (ROK) armed forces, Truman had difficulty in obtaining funds from Congress in 1949-1950. The President also went along with his advisers in not supplying the ROK forces with offensive weapons, such as aircraft, tanks and heavy artillery. President Rhee had often threatened to attack North Korea, so there was an obvious reluctance to provide him with the means of doing so.[59] In his memoirs, MacArthur described the State Department decision to lightly-equip the ROK Army, precluding their use in offensive operations as "curiously myopic reasoning."[60] The Mutual Defense Assistance Act, which Truman had signed on October 6, 1949, provided for $10.2 million in military aid for South Korea, but these aid items were just beginning to arrive when the fighting broke out.[61]

Secretary of State Dean Acheson defined the

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[59]Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 20; Truman, Memoirs, II, 329. See also, Ridgway, Korean War, 10-11. Two weeks prior to the attack on South Korea, Ambassador Muccio informed the State Department that the North Korean forces had a great superiority in aircraft, heavy artillery, and tanks, which would ". . . provide North Korea with a margin of victory in the event of a full-scale invasion of the Republic." Muccio's report is quoted in Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1052-53.

[60]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 328-30.

[61]Paige, Korean Decision, 70.

strategic military thinking of the Truman Administration with regard to the Far East in a celebrated and controversial speech to the National Press Club in Washington on January 12, 1950. Acheson described the defensive perimeter of the United States in the Pacific by tracing an imaginary line from the Aleutians through Japan and the Ryukyus to the Philippine Islands. Within the boundaries of this strategic perimeter the United States had the resources and assumed the responsibility for reacting immediately against any aggressor.[62] The line Acheson described was not drawn by him, but by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, with the concurrence of the National Security Council and the President. In fact, in an interview in Tokyo on March 1, 1949, General MacArthur had described exactly the same line of defense.[63]

The omission of Korea and Formosa, the latter by then the home of Nationalist China, from the perimeter defined by Acheson, made the speech controversial, particularly since the attack on South Korea occurred six months later. With respect to nations beyond the pale, Acheson said that ". . . no person can guarantee

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[62]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 356-57. Major excerpts from the speech are printed in Bernstein and Matusow, (eds.), Truman Administration, 430-37.

[63]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 357.

these areas against military attack. . . . should such an attack occur . . . the initial reliance must be on the people attacked to resist it and then upon the . . . United Nations."[64] What the Secretary said was not new. It was a reiteration of an official policy of American military disengagement from the Asian mainland, Formosa and Korea that was plainly evident. Acheson was saying that any nation attacked outside the American perimeter would have to defend itself. Should it prove unable to contain the aggressor, then the United Nations would come to that nation's aid. The United States would not automatically regard an act of aggression outside the perimeter as a cause for war, but would act in concert with the United Nations.[65] Some critics have said that the Acheson speech ". . . could have been interpreted by the Communists as a green light."[66] The criticism seems strained, since the reverse of the proposition would have it that the North Korean attack would not have taken place had the Secretary of State not made this speech.

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[64]Ibid. See also, Paige, Korean Decision, 67.

[65]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 356-57; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 20; Paige, Korean Decision, 67-68; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 578.

[66]Warren, President as World Leader, 337. For similar opinions, see Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 14-15; Paige, Korean Decision, 333-34; Rees, Age of Containment, 38; Lukacs, History of the Cold War, 89.

> . . . the critics . . . assume that if the Secretary had not publicly broadcast the outlines of the Pacific defense perimeter, the Soviets would have remained completely unaware of our decimated army, our pre-occupation with total war, and inflexible military strategy; that they would not have learned of the Joint Chiefs' reluctance to commit their troops on the Asian continent, of the few troops at their command, and their emphasis upon stationing these troops in areas considered more vital to American security in an all-out war than Korea. . . . it was not American words but American policy that probably encouraged the Communists to believe that the United States would not defend South Korea.[67]

The animosity between the two Koreas increased by early 1950 to the point where military conflict seemed more and more of a possibility. The North Koreans continuously probed the 38th parallel with hit-and-run raids and sent bands of guerrillas into South Korea to foment internal disorder. The chief source of military intelligence on Korea for Truman was MacArthur's headquarters in Tokyo. The reports coming in in the spring of 1950 told of a rapid build-up of North Korean forces. The Central Intelligence Agency informed the Commander in Chief that the North Koreans were capable of a full-scale attack at any time they should choose.[68] A weekly

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[67]Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 21. Diplomatic historian Richard W. Leopold would agree that Acheson's speech was not a factor in the attack on Korea. See "United States in World Affairs," 235. For Acheson's own testimony in defense of his Press Club speech, see Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1681, 1740-41, 1816-18, 2019-20. Acheson again had to defend his "perimeter speech" against an attack made by Eisenhower in the presidential campaign of 1952. Present at the Creation, 691.

[68]Truman, Memoirs, II, 331.

intelligence cable from G-2 (Intelligence Section) of MacArthur's headquarters, dated March 10, 1950, contained a line reading, "Report received that People's Army will invade South Korea in June 1950."[69] But attached to this report was a commentary that clearly stated that G-2 did not anticipate that such an attack would occur. "It is believed," read a March 25 cable from the Far East Command Intelligence Section, "that there will be no civil war in Korea this spring or summer."[70] A MacArthur aide, Major General Courtney Whitney, has claimed that "the record shows" that the Far East Command had warned Washington of an impending North Korean attack 1,500 times in the period between June 1945 and the actual attack in June 1950, among them the warning of March 10.[71] MacArthur has also written of these warnings:

> In vain were my efforts to expose the growing Communist threat in the Far East. From June 1949 to June 1950, constant intelligence reports of increasing urgency were submitted to Washington, advising of a possible North Korean thrust. But little impression was made against the general apathy. . . . One of these reports even suggested that June 1950 would be the likely time for North Korea to cross the 38th parallel.[72]

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[69]Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1991.

[70]Ibid. See also, Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 15.

[71]Courtney Whitney, MacArthur: His Rendezvous with History (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956), 320. Hereinafter cited as Whitney, MacArthur.

[72]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 324.

The intelligence data from Korea did indicate the possibility of armed conflict. The problem faced by the President was that the daily intelligence summary he received from the CIA also informed him, as he put it, ". . . that there were any number of other spots in the world where the Russians 'possessed the capability' to attack."[73] At the time of the attack on South Korea, there were abundant rumors of war, but they were not at all confined to the Korean peninsula.[74] It would have been impossible for Truman to take immediate, remedial steps as each of these warnings was received. He would be especially disinclined to react to a warning from MacArthur's G-2, since that unit had sounded the tocsin more than 1,500 times. In addition, since it was the President's policy not to become unilaterally involved in conflict outside the Pacific defensive perimeter, it is difficult to imagine what action could have been taken on these reports warning that the "possibility" of attack existed.

President Truman was back in his home state of

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[73]Truman, Memoirs, II, 331. Admiral Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter, Director of the CIA, told a Senate committee the day after the attack that his agency had been reporting North Korean troop movements for months and could not understand why the "receiving agencies" had failed to properly evaluate them. New York Times, June 27, 1950.

[74]Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 2113.

Missouri on June 9, 1950, to give the commencement address and receive an honorary degree at the University of Missouri. He spoke with pride of the path of international cooperation the nation had followed since 1945, rejecting the "dangerous futility of isolationism." He had praise for American support of the United Nations, the economic recovery of Europe, ratification of the NATO pact and ". . . our military assistance to the common defense of free nations . . . part of our strong, positive program to achieve a just and lasting peace."[75] The President remained in St. Louis to join his comrades of the 35th Division in their annual reunion, highlighted by a parade on June 10 which Truman led on foot: ". . . the President cut a jaunty figure as he marched proudly with his old World War I division, and especially with Battery D, 129th Field Artillery, of which he was captain."[76] Two weeks later, Truman returned to Missouri, this time to spend a quiet weekend at home in Independence. A telephone call from the Secretary of State informed "Captain Harry" of a new call to arms.[77]

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[75]Item No. 159, Commencement Address at the University of Missouri, June 9, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 465. Full text of this speech also appears in the New York Times, June 10, 1950.

[76]New York Times, June 11, 1950.

[77]Albert L. Warner, "How the Korea Decision Was Made," Harper's Magazine, CCII, No. 1213 (June, 1951), 99. Hereinafter cited as Warner, "How Korea Decision Was Made."

A cable from Ambassador Muccio in Seoul had arrived at the State Department at 9:26 P.M., Saturday, June 24, 1950. Shortly after ten o'clock the message was decoded. Dean Rusk, Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs, called Secretary of State Acheson at his Maryland farm to inform him of Muccio's note. Acheson immediately called the President at his home in Independence to relay the message, which read, in part: ". . . North Korean Forces invaded Republic of Korea territory at several points this morning. . . . It would appear . . . that it constitutes an all-out offensive against the Republic of Korea."[78] Truman gave tentative approval to Acheson's suggestion that the matter be brought before the United Nations Security Council. He accepted Acheson's advice that he remain in Independence at least until morning, when the situation would be clearer.[79]

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[78]Doc. No. 1, Cable, Muccio to State Department, June 25, 1950, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 11. The cable is reprinted in Paige, Korean Decision, 90; Truman, Memoirs, II, 333-34. See also, Appleman, South to the Naktong, 36-37; Ridgway, Korean War, 23. Seoul and Washington are separated by seven thousand miles and the International Date Line. Korean time was fourteen hours ahead of Washington. Thus, Muccio's cable arrived in Washington at 9:26 PM, June 24, but it was then late morning of June 25 in Seoul. For a more detailed explanation of the time differential, see Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 571. Korean or Washington time will be indicated where it is not clear and is relevant.

[79]Truman, Memoirs, II, 331-32. See also, Paige, Korean Decision, 93-94; Warner, "How Korea Decision Was Made," 100; Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 23.

During the night, reports continued coming in from the wire services, Ambassador Muccio, and Far Eastern Command Headquarters in Tokyo, all confirming that the attack constituted an all-out invasion, not just another border probe. Acheson called the President again, two hours after the first call. The Secretary told Truman that the fighting in Korea was serious. Acheson said that the State Department had drafted a resolution which charged the North Koreans with breaching the peace by an act of aggression. Truman gave his final approval for Acheson to request an emergency session of the UN Security Council.[80] At 3:00 A.M. Trygve Lie, UN Secretary General, was asked to convoke a meeting of the Security Council as soon as possible.[81]

The Security Council of the United Nations met at

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[80]Paige, Korean Decision, 101-102; Warner, "How Korea Decision Was Made," 101.

[81]Doc. No. 2, Deputy Representative of the United States to the United Nations (Ernest A. Gross) to the Secretary-General (Lie), June 25, 1950, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 11-12. See also, Warner, "How Korea Decision Was Made," 100; Glenn D. Paige (ed.), 1950: Truman's Decision, The United States Enters the Korean War (New York: Chelsea House, 1970), 55-56. Hereinafter cited as Paige, 1950: Truman's Decision. Truman wrote an interesting note to Acheson about a month later. In part, it reads: "Your initiative in immediately calling the Security Council of the U.N. on Saturday night and notifying me was the key to what followed afterwards. Had you not acted promptly in that direction we would have had to go into Korea alone." Truman to Acheson, July 19, 1950, quoted in Acheson, Present at the Creation, 415. Emphasis supplied.

2:00 P.M., June 25 in response to the American request. By this time, the UN Commission in Korea had filed a report with the Secretariat, describing the conflict as "full-scale war" endangering international peace. The Commission recommended that the matter be brought before the Security Council.[82] In the Security Council Session the United States Deputy Representative, Ernest A. Gross, reviewed developments in Korea since 1945 and offered a draft resolution calling upon North Korea to end hostile actions and withdraw beyond the thirty-eighth parallel.[83] After some minor revisions, the Security Council adopted the United States' draft resolution by a vote of nine to zero, Yugoslavia abstaining and the Soviet Union unrepresented.[84]

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[82]Doc. No. 3, United Nations Commission on Korea to Secretary-General, June 25, 1950, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 12. See also, Paige (ed.), 1950: Truman's Decision, 56-58. Among American scholars, D. F. Fleming seems alone in suggesting the possibility that the fighting was a North Korean reprisal for a South Korean attack. The Cold War, II, 598-600. On June 26, the Communist-oriented Daily Worker (N.Y.) had made the same charge. See New York Times, June 27, 1950. A Soviet diplomatic note to the United States on the 29th took the same position. See Doc. No. 95, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 64.

[83]Doc. No. 4, Statement by U.S. Deputy Representative to the Security Council, June 25, 1950, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 13-15. Text of statement also appears in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3365-68; Paige (ed.), 1950: Truman's Decision, 58-64.

[84]New York Times, June 26, 1950; United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 1-2, 16. See also, Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 76; Warner, "How Korea

The President received a call from Acheson as he was sitting down to Sunday dinner. The Secretary told him that the UN Security Council would meet in emergency session that afternoon and would undoubtedly approve the cease-fire resolution. It was Acheson's opinion that the North Koreans would ignore the resolution, in which case it would be necessary for the President to decide what the United States should do to assist the Republic of Korea. Truman told Acheson that he was leaving for Washington at once. In the meantime, he instructed the Secretary to meet with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Service Secretaries and begin working out recommendations for a meeting to be held upon his return.[85]

On the three-hour flight back to Washington, Truman remained alone in his compartment. He later recalled that he spent the time considering the Korean situation in

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Decision Was Made," 101; U.S., Department of State, United States Policy in the Korean Conflict: July, 1950-February, 1951, Publication No. 4263, Far Eastern Series 44 (Washington, 1951), 46. Hereinafter cited as United States Policy in the Korean Conflict. The UN resolution of June 25 is printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3368-69. The intent of the resolution is discussed at some length in ibid. See, for example, Pt. 1, 360-61; Pt. 3, 1720-21, 2015, 2020. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 579.

[85]Truman, Memoirs, II, 332. See also, Warner, "How Korea Decision Was Made," 101. As he departed for Washington from the Kansas City airport, Truman told reporters: "Don't make it alarmist. It could be a dangerous situation, but I hope it isn't." Anthony Leviero, New York Times, June 26, 1950.

light of the "lessons of history." Truman believed firmly that the proper principles to guide the decisions he would now have to make were to be found in past experience.[86] Truman's recollection of the flight back was recorded in his Memoirs:

> I had time to think aboard the plane. In my generation, this was not the first occasion when the strong had attacked the weak. I recalled some earlier instances: Manchuria, Ethiopia, Austria. I remembered how each time that the democracies failed to act it had encouraged the aggressors to keep going ahead. Communism was acting in Korea just as Hitler, Mussolini, and the Japanese had acted ten, fifteen, and twenty years earlier. . . . If the Communists were permitted to force their way into the Republic of Korea without opposition from the free world, no small nation would have the courage to resist threats and aggression by stronger Communist neighbors. If this was allowed to go unchallenged it would mean a third world war, just as similar incidents had brought on the second world war. . . .[87]

The President's plane landed in Washington at 7:15 on the evening of June 25. He was met by Acheson and Defense Secretary Louis Johnson. Acheson was able to inform Truman that the Security Council had adopted the American resolution.[88] During the ride in from the airport, the President gave the impression that he was determined to take firm action, but, as usual, he was not

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[86]Paige interviewed Truman in July, 1957. See Korean Decision, 114.

[87]Truman, Memoirs, II, 332-33.

[88]Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 76. See also, Phillips, Truman Presidency, 294; Truman, Memoirs, II, 333.

ready to specify any steps until hearing from all his advisers.[89] He was to meet with those advisers at Blair House, the temporary presidential residence, immediately upon his arrival.

Truman opened the Blair House meeting with a brief statement to the effect that he was maintaining an "open mind" as to possible actions. He wanted to hear fully from all his advisers, but planned to make no major decisions that night.[90] Truman then asked Acheson to summarize the latest developments in Korea and present the recommendations that the State and Defense Departments had prepared during the day. The Secretary of State read the various reports received from Muccio and described the emergency session of the Security Council. He also sketched in the military situation which saw the North Koreans advancing along a broad front. In Acheson's

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[89]Warner, "How Korea Decision Was Made," 101.

[90]Paige, Korean Decision, 126. The conferees were Secretary Acheson, Under Secretary James Webb, Deputy Under Secretary Dean Rusk, Assistant Under Secretary John Hickerson and Ambassador-at-Large Phillip Jessup from the State Department. Defense was represented by Secretary Johnson, Secretary of the Army Frank Pace, Secretary of the Navy Francis Matthews, Secretary of the Air Force Thomas Finletter, and, from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Generals Omar Bradley, J. Lawton Collins, Hoyt Vandenberg and Admiral Forrest Sherman. See Truman, Memoirs, II, 333; Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1049; Jay Walz, New York Times, June 25, 1950.

words: "I gave a darkening report of great confusion."[91]

The Secretary of State then presented the recommendations prepared for the President's consideration: (1) that American nationals, particularly dependents of the military and diplomatic missions to Korea, be evacuated; (2) that the U.S. Air Force be commanded to protect this evacuation by force, if necessary to keep the requisite ports and airfields open; (3) that General MacArthur be instructed to provide the Republic of Korea forces with arms and ammunition over and above current allocations; (4) that the Seventh Fleet be ordered into the Formosa Strait to prevent a Chinese Communist invasion of Formosa or vice versa; (5) that consideration of additional assistance for South Korea should be given, based on the Security Council resolution, or supplementary resolutions; (6) that military aid to Indochina be increased.[92]

Following his long-established routine in this type of meeting, the President then went around the table, asking each adviser in turn to state his opinion of these recommendations and soliciting any additional views they might have. The general consensus supported the

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[91]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 406. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 333-34; Paige, Korean Decision, 126-27.

[92]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 406. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 334; Paige, Korean Decision, 127.

recommendations made by Acheson, with varying degress of enthusiasm for particular points.[93] Truman's questions to the Joint Chiefs were quite extensive, leaving Defense Secretary Johnson with the impression that the Commander in Chief had a thorough knowledge of troop dispositions and the existing military situation.[94] The military men told Truman that they did not believe the Soviet Union would use the Korean situation as a pretext for a general war. The Air Force and Navy chiefs, Vandenberg and Sherman, told the President that their services would probably be able to provide enough assistance to the ROK Army, if ordered, to enable them to stem the tide of the North Korean advance. The military men were not disposed to using ground forces in Korea because of the terrain and the uncertain conditions.[95]

As the first Blair House conference ended (about 11:00 P.M.), Truman began to make his decisions. He approved the use of military aircraft and ships for the evacuation of American nationals. He also authorized the use of naval and air units in combat if needed to protect

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[93]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 406.

[94]Louis Johnson testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 4, 2580.

[95]Truman, Memoirs, II, 335; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 406. For a detailed description of the first Blair House meeting, see Paige, Korean Decision, 125-41.

the evacuation area (Inchon-Kimpo-Seoul) from falling into the hands of the North Korean forces. In no case were these operations to be conducted above the thirty-eighth parallel.[96] MacArthur was to be ordered to provide as much ammunition and military equipment as he deemed necessary to South Korea. The Seventh Fleet--the carrier Valley Forge, the Rochester, a heavy cruiser, eight destroyers and some twelve lesser craft--was ordered to sail North to the Formosa Strait at once. Truman stipulated that no further orders to the fleet were to be transmitted until they arrived on station.[97] Reflecting his belief that the invasion might be a Soviet ruse, Truman instructed Acheson to survey all areas of the world where the Russians might strike. Before midnight, cables were being transmitted from the State Department to all diplomatic and military missions in the world, requesting an intelligence recheck of Soviet intentions.[98] At about

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[96]Bradley testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 933; Vandenberg testimony, ibid., 1475; Johnson testimony, ibid., Pt. 4, 2573; Appendix K, ibid., Pt. 5, 3192. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 334-35; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 295.

[97]Truman, Memoirs, II, 334; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 406; New York Times, June 26, 1950. See also, Paige, Korean Decision, 135; Warner, "How Korea Decision Was Made," 102; Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 78.

[98]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 406. See also, Paige, Korean Decision, 134; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 295.

the same time, the Joint Chiefs of Staff were transmitting orders to MacArthur based on Truman's decisions.[99]

These first decisions by the Commander in Chief were tentative. They did not represent a positive commitment to the defense of South Korea. Truman had made minimal decisions, not out of any fear to act, but because he wanted to wait until his military and diplomatic intelligence clarified the situation. However, there is every reason to believe that he was already resolved to take whatever action was required to defend South Korea. Truman has written that one strong impression he had from the Blair House meeting was ". . . the complete, almost unspoken acceptance on the part of everyone that whatever had to be done to meet this aggression had to be done. . . . This was the test of all the talk of the last five years of collective security."[100] The President and all of his major counselors were of one mind on the need

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[99]T. R. Fehrenbach, This Kind of War: A Study in Unpreparedness (New York: Macmillan, 1963), 80-81. Hereinafter cited as Fehrenbach, This Kind of War. See also, Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 25-26; Paige, Korean Decision, 141-42; Appleman, South to the Naktong, 38; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 579-80; Whitney, MacArthur, 323; J. Lawton Collins, War in Peacetime: The History and Lessons of Korea (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969), 15. Hereinafter cited as Collins, War in Peacetime.

[100]Truman, Memoirs, II, 334. See also, Acheson, Present at the Creation, 406; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 30; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 295-96.

for action to defend the Korean Republic, with the degree of American involvement apparently to be determined chiefly by the ability of the South Korean forces to resist the attack. "Once this decision had been made, the progressive commitment of forces and the enlargement of their scope of action was only a reflection of increasingly clear intelligence reports from the battlefield."[101]

The White House issued a press release on Monday, June 26, 1950, in which Truman acknowledged that he had conferred with the leadership of the State and Defense Departments Sunday evening. He avoided mentioning any decisions reached, except to state that the "type" of aid being furnished Korea under the Mutual Defense Assistance Program was being augmented and expedited. The President had praise for the Security Council resolution and words of warning to the aggressors: "Willful disregard of the obligation to keep the peace cannot be tolerated by nations that support the United Nations Charter."[102]

The President was subject to numerous pressures for action on Monday. He had begun the day--as was his

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[101]Hoare, "Truman," 192.

[102]Press Release No. 2444, Statement by the President, June 26, 1950, copy in Tannenwald Papers, Chronology, Public Statements, MacArthur Hearings, Truman Library. Statement is published as Item No. 172, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 491-92; Doc. No. 6, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 16-17; Paige (ed.), 1950: Truman's Decision, 90.

custom--by reading four major newspapers (New York Times, New York Herald Tribune, Baltimore Sun and Washington Post) after breakfast. Two of the papers, the Times and the Sun, called for firm and decisive action.[103] As the day wore on, he received several appeals directly from Korea. A cable from the Korean National Christian Council was received from Seoul at the White House at 8:46 A.M. saying, "Large invading forces are pressing around us, begging your immediate help."[104] The Korean National Assembly appealed to the United States for immediate assistance.[105] Truman also received a message from President Rhee bearing the same urgent plea for assistance.[106] At 3:50 P.M. Truman received the Korean Ambassador, John M. Chang, who delivered the messages from Rhee and the National Assembly. Truman recalled Chang looking so depressed that he tried to encourage him: "I told him to

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[103]Paige, Korean Decision, 145-46. See also, Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 80.

[104]H. Nam Kung to the President, June 26, 1950, Truman Papers, OF, 471 Misc. (1948-53), Truman Library.

[105]United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 2, 17. See also, Paige (ed.), 1950: Truman's Decision, 100; Paige, Korean Decision, 156-57.

[106]Truman, Memoirs, II, 336.

hold fast--that help was on the way."[107]

Early on the evening of June 26 Dean Acheson called the President to inform him that conditions in South Korea had seriously deteriorated during the day. The Secretary suggested that another full scale conference was necessary so that Truman could hear these reports directly and issue further instructions. The President told Acheson to assemble his advisers at Blair House for a meeting at 9:00 P.M. The group which assembled was essentially the same although Francis Matthews, Secretary of the Navy, was absent.[108]

Truman first heard the military situation reports. He learned that the South Korean government had abandoned Seoul in the face of a rapidly-advancing North Korean armored column. General Vandenberg told the President that American fighter planes had been in combat over the South Korean capital and that at least one North Korean aircraft had been destroyed.[109] General Bradley then read Truman the latest communiqué from MacArthur:

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[107] Ibid., 336-37. See also, Acheson, Present at the Creation, 407; Paige, Korean Decision, 157-58; New York Times, June 27, 1950.

[108] Acheson, Present at the Creation, 407; Truman, Memoirs, II, 337; Anthony Leviero, New York Times, June 28, 1950. See also, Bradley testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 933.

[109] Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 80; New York Times, June 27, 1950.

> Piecemeal entry into action vicinity Seoul by South Korean Third and Fifth Divisions has not succeeded in stopping the penetration recognized as the enemy main effort for the past 2 days with intent to seize the capital city of Seoul. Tanks entering suburbs of Seoul. . . .
>
> South Korean units unable to resist determined Northern offensive. Contributory factor exclusive enemy possession of tanks and fighter planes. South Korean casualties as an index to fighting have not shown adequate resistance capabilities or the will to fight and our estimate is that a complete collapse is imminent.[110]

At the President's request, Acheson led off the discussion of further American action by making a number of recommendations. The Secretary of State felt that a new resolution should be presented to the United Nations, asking the member states to furnish South Korea with all aid necessary to repel the invasion and restore peace. Acheson also urged that the Seventh Fleet be instructed to block any Chinese Communist attack on Formosa and any Nationalist Chinese thrust at the mainland. The most significant of his recommendations, however, was that the Air Force and Navy should be allowed to provide full tactical support for South Korean forces, but that their military activities should not extend to areas above the thirty-eighth parallel.[111]

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[110] Quoted in Truman, Memoirs, II, 337. See also, Paige, Korean Decision, 162.

[111] Acheson, Present at the Creation, 407-408. See also, Johnson testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 4, 2581; Warner, "How the Korea Decision Was Made," 103; Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 80.

All the advisers present were asked to comment on Acheson's recommendations by Truman, who had already made it clear that he considered Korea a test of American resolve, like Berlin, that had to be met.[112] Secretary of Defense Johnson had no recommendations of his own to offer.[113] General Bradley and Collins of the Army doubted that air and naval support could stem the momentum of the invasion. They also told the President that if American ground forces were needed, it would probably require at least a partial mobilization. Johnson objected to using ground troops in Korea, but Truman asked the Joint Chiefs to give immediate consideration to that possibility. Although the conferees discussed whether the Soviet Union might take the use of American air and navy as sufficient cause for intervention or expansion of the conflict into other areas, these possibilities were considered remote.[114] None of the advisers present told the President that the United States should not use the Air Force and Navy in the

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[112] Truman, Memoirs, II, 337.

[113] It is Johnson's recollection that neither he nor anyone else from the Defense Department specifically approved or disapproved of military involvement in Korea during the meeting. See his testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 4, 2581, 2584. Acheson has said that, "The recommendations met with general favor, including Louis Johnson's. . . ." Present at the Creation, 408.

[114] Paige, Korean Decision, 165-66, 173; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 408.

defense of South Korea.[115] Truman approved the recommendations presented by Acheson. He ordered Secretary Johnson to contact General MacArthur and directly inform him of the decisions which had been made.[116] The conference broke up at 9:40 P.M. As Truman left the meeting room he remarked, "Everything I have done in the last five years has been to try to avoid making a decision such as I had to make tonight."[117]

The directive transmitted to MacArthur assigned to him operational control of all military and naval forces in and around Korea. It also made clear that there was to be no military action against North Korean territory. A paraphrased excerpt from MacArthur's orders read:

> In order to clear South Korea of North Korean military forces, all military targets south of the thirty-eighth parallel were cleared for attack by the Air Force. Similarly naval forces were authorized to operate against forces engaged in aggression against

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[115]Paige, Korean Decision, 173-74. See also, Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 80; Warner, "How the Korea Decision Was Made," 103.

[116]Truman, Memoirs, II, 337; Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1475. MacArthur's "official" biographer said the General paused in amazement to reflect on how, without consulting Congress or the field commander: "Step by hesitant step," Truman, Acheson and Bradley, "agreed among themselves to enter the Korean War." Whitney, MacArthur, 324. See also, MacArthur, Reminiscences, 331.

[117]Quoted in Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 80. See also, Phillips, Truman Presidency, 299.

South Korea without restriction in coastal waters and sea approaches south of the thirty-eighth parallel.[118]

At 10:00 P.M., shortly after leaving the meeting with his military advisers, Truman placed a call to Charles S. Murphy, Special Counsel to the President. Truman gave Murphy a list of congressional leaders he wished to have attend a conference in his office at 11:30 the following morning, June 27.[119] During the session with his advisers, the President had apparently broached the subject of asking Congress for a joint resolution supporting his decisions, but had been dissuaded by Acheson on the grounds that it would precipitate attacks on him by hostile Republicans and generate lengthy discussions of the eventual effect and financial expenditures involved in this intervention.[120] Truman then decided on this meeting with the legislative leadership to simply inform them of what had

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[118]Marshall testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 535. See also, Appleman, South to the Naktong, 38, 42-43; Paige, Korean Decision.

[119]The following persons were on the list: Vice President Alben Barkley, Speaker Sam Rayburn, Senators Scott Lucas, Tom Connally, Alexander Wiley, Alexander Smith, Walter George, Elbert Thomas, Millard Tydings, Styles Bridges and Congressmen John McCormack, John Kee, Charles Easton, Carl Vinson, Dewey Short. See Murphy to Matthew Connelly, June 27, 1950, Truman Papers, Lloyd Files, Korea folder, Truman Library. Mike Mansfield, who was not on the list, apparently did attend. Barkely and George, who were out of town, did not. See Truman, Memoirs, II, 338; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 408; Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 82; Paige, Korean Decision, 187.

[120]Paige, Korean Decision, 187.

occurred and the decisions he had made.[121]

The meeting between the President and the congressional leaders was held in the Cabinet Room of the White House at 11:30 A.M., Tuesday, June 27. With Truman were the Secretaries of State and Defense and most of the other officials who had participated in the two conferences at Blair House. Acheson summarized all that had transpired since Saturday evening, stressing the desperate situation being faced by the South Korean forces and the Administration's belief that a failure to respond to this invasion would inevitably lead to World War III. The President then spoke at some length, emphasizing that the United States was not acting unilaterally, but through the United Nations which he believed would suffer the fate of the League of Nations if it failed to act in this instance. Truman told those present of his effort to get the Soviet Union to intercede with North Korea. He read the text of a statement he planned to release following the meeting which would make public the actions he had taken. Truman then asked for questions and a general discussion of the American role in the crisis followed.[122]

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[121]Truman, Memoirs, II, 338; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 408.

[122]Truman, Memoirs, II, 338. See also, Acheson, Present at the Creation, 409; Paige, Korean Decision, 188-89; Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 82. A diplomatic note to the Soviet Union, dated June 27, 1950,

The Senators and Representatives posed several questions as to military dispositions. They were assured by the Joint Chiefs that no American ground forces were being employed in Korea nor were there any plans for such a commitment. Senator Millard Tydings, Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, informed Truman that his committee had that morning favorably reported out bills allowing the President to call up the National Guard and to extend the Selective Service Act of 1948.[123] Truman personally assured the Congressmen present that his actions were in full accord with the principles and policies of the United Nations.[124] There is clear-cut agreement in the recollections of the participants that no one present disputed Truman's decisions. They were agreed that the Administration's course was the proper response to the

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asked that the Kremlin disavow any responsibility for the North Korean invasion and also that it use its influence to convince the North Koreans to withdraw their forces immediately. The USSR responded on the 29th, saying that the fighting was brought on by South Korean border raids, so the responsibility rested with them, ". . . and upon those who stand behind their back." The Soviet Union refused to intercede, since this, they said, would constitute interference in the internal affairs of Korea and such an act would not be consonant with Soviet principles. See Docs. No. 94, 95, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 63-64; New York Times, June 28, 1950.

[123]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 409. See also, Paige, Korean Decision, 190-91; Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1779; Pt. 4, 2609.

[124]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 409.

situation.[125] However, two of the participants, Secretary Johnson and Senator Alexander Smith, later recalled that Senator Smith and, perhaps, Senator Tom Connally as well, wanted to know why Truman had not consulted Congress before making the decision to intervene militarily. There is no evidence to indicate that the subject was discussed at this meeting, but it was at a subsequent meeting of Truman with these same conferees on June 30, three days later.[126] In any event, while Truman had entertained thoughts of obtaining a joint resolution from Congress, he believed he was acting within the scope of his powers as commander in chief in ordering naval and air intervention without congressional sanction.[127] Testifying a year later before Congress, Acheson supported this conclusion. The Secretary of State was asked by Senator Harry Byrd how he could justify the President's action without the prior approval of Congress. Acheson replied: "Those orders were issued by the President in exercise of his authority as President and Commander in Chief."[128]

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[125]Truman, Memoirs, II, 338; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 409. See also, Paige, Korean Decision, 189-90; Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1779.

[126]Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 82. See also, Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1779-80, 2021; Pt. 4, 2592.

[127]Hoare, "Truman," 191-92.

[128]Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 2014, 15.

As the meeting with the Congressmen ended, the White House released to the press the President's statement on the American response to the Korean crisis. In part, it read:

> In Korea the Government forces, which were armed to prevent border raids and to preserve internal security, were attacked by invading forces from North Korea. The Security Council of the United Nations called upon the invading troops to cease hostilities and to withdraw to the 38th parallel. This they have not done, but on the contrary have pressed the attack. The Security Council called upon all members of the United Nations to render every assistance to the United Nations inthe execution of this resolution. In these circumstances I have ordered United States air and sea forces to give the Korean Government troops cover and support.
>
> . . . I have ordered the Seventh Fleet to prevent any attack on Formosa. As a corollary of this action I am calling upon the Chinese Government on Formosa to cease all air and sea operations against the mainland. The Seventh Fleet will see that this is done. . . .
>
> I have also directed that United States Forces in the Philippines be strengthened and that military assistance to the Philippine Government be accelerated.
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> I have similarly directed acceleration in the furnishing of military assistance to the forces of France and the Associated States in Indo China and the dispatch of a military mission to provide close working relations with those forces. . . .[129]

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[129] A copy of theoriginal press release, dated June 27, 1950, is in Tannenwald Papers, Subject File, Chronology, Public Statements, MacArthur Hearings, Truman Library. This statement by Truman has been reprinted in numerous places. See,for example, Item No. 173, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 492; Truman, Memoirs, II, 338-39; Doc. No. 9, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 18; Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3369; New York Times, June 28, 1950; Paige (ed.), 1950: Truman's Decision, 103-104.

An editorial in the New York Times, commenting on Truman's statement, said that his decision was ". . . a momentous and courageous act."[130] In the same paper, correspondent James Reston wrote that Truman's decision had ". . . produced a transformation in the spirit of the United States Government." Reston added that differences of opinion as to what reaction the United States should take ". . . have apparently been swept away by the general conviction that the dangers of inaction were greater than the dangers of the bold action taken by the President."[131] The New York Herald Tribune, in a front page editorial, declared: "The President has acted--and spoken--with a magnificent courage and terse decision. . . . It was time to draw a line. . . ."[132] Scores of telegrams came to the White House, endorsing Truman's action by a margin of ten-to-one.[133] One of the telegrams was from Thomas E.

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[130] New York Times, June 28, 1950.

[131] Ibid.

[132] Quoted in Eric F. Goldman, The Crucial Decade--And After: America, 1945-1960 (New York: Random House, 1959), 159. Hereinafter cited as Goldman, Crucial Decade.

[133] Goldman, in ibid. (p. 159), said that the letters and telegrams were ten to one in favor of the President's action. An internal White House memorandum was not as generous. It noted that letters were running approximately ten to one in favor, but a combined total of letters and telegrams showed that 775 approved, 278 were opposed, and 125 were described as "miscellaneous in nature," for an average of approximately three to one favoring Truman's decision. "W. J. H." (William J. Hopkins, White House

Dewey, the Republican nominee in 1944 and 1948: "I wholeheartedly agree with and support the difficult decision you have made today. . . ."[134] Columnist Arthur Krock noted that Truman had been determined ". . . from the outset to adopt the forceful policy which was announced this morning."[135] Joseph C. Harsch, writing in the Christian Science Monitor, said Truman's announcement was received in Washington with a sense of relief and a strong expression of unity and satisfaction.[136]

> The decision to use the Navy and Air Force was greeted by a general approval and enthusiasm which few people--after all the war's trouble and controversy--now remember. Practically every major newspaper in the country approved, with the exception of the Chicago Tribune and its affiliate, the Washington Times-Herald.[137]

Truman's statement was read to the House on the afternoon of the 27th by Democratic Floor Leader John McCormack. As he concluded, the members rose as a body to cheer and applaud. Before the afternoon had ended they had rushed to passage extension of the Selective

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Executive Clerk) to Charles Ross (Press Secretary), June 29, 1950, Truman Papers, OF, 471-B, Korean Emergency, Truman Library.

[134]Quoted in New York Times, June 28, 1950. Governor Dewey's telegram and Truman's reply are printed as Item No. 175, Exchange of Messages with Governor Dewey, June 27, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 496.

[135]New York Times, June 28, 1950.

[136]Christian Science Monitor, June 29, 1950.

[137]Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 82.

Service Act by a 315 to 4 vote. Truman was accorded unprecedented peacetime powers as Commander in Chief by this act, particularly in the provisions authorizing him to call up the National Guard and reserves for up to twenty-one months active duty.[138] The only dissonant note struck in the House came from Vito Marcantonio, an American Labor party Representative from New York. He charged that Truman ". . . had usurped the powers of Congress by declaring war against North Korea."[139]

The Senate reaction to the reading of the President's statement was much more reserved, but reflected a general bipartisan endorsement of the decision to intervene. Republicans such as Willian Knowland (California), Leverett Saltonstall (Massachusetts) and Wayne Morse (Oregon), endorsed the President's statement as did Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., (Massachusetts), who went further than his fellow Republicans in expressing the hope that Truman would use ground forces in Korea if the military felt they were needed. These Senators were joined in their expressions of approval of the Korean decision by Democratic leaders like Herbert Lehman (New York), Estes

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[138] New York Times, June 28, 1950.

[139] Harold B. Hinton, New York Times, June 28, 1950. See also, Goldman, Crucial Decade, 158-59; Paige, Korean Decision, 198; Warner, "How Korea Decision Was Made," 104.

Kefauver (Tennessee) and Hubert Humphrey (Minnesota). While no senator voiced open opposition to the announced decisions, Arthur Watkins (Utah) and James Kem (Missouri), both Republicans, challenged the President's decision not to obtain congressional approval. Kem, noting the passages in the statement ordering the Seventh Fleet to isolate Formosa and prevent attack, asked: "Does that mean he has arrogated to himself the authority of declaring war?"[140] By way of rebuttal, Senator Scott Lucas told Kem that, ". . . on 126 occasions in the past a President. . . , acting in his capacity as Commander in Chief of the nation's armed forces, had deployed these forces . . . without asking a declaration of war of Congress."[141]

The most significant challenge to the President's authority to send American forces into foreign combat without the approval of Congress came from Senator Robert A. Taft, an Ohio Republican. Taft delivered a lengthy major speech on the floor of the Senate, Wednesday afternoon, June 28. The Senator blamed the Korean crisis on the "outrageous, aggressive attitude" of the Soviet Union and the "bungling and inconsistent foreign policy of the

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[140] Paige, Korean Decision, 196; Hinton, New York Times, June 28, 1950. See also, Warner, "How Korea Decision Was Made," 104.

[141] New York Times, June 28, 1950. See also, Paige, Korean Decision, 196.

administration."[142] But Taft pointed out that Truman had not attempted to consult with Congress or request a resolution approving the action taken. Truman's actions, Taft charged, created a de facto condition of war between the United States and North Korea, without the constitutionally-required approval of the Congress.[143] It was the Senator's opinion that these actions represented usurpation of power by the Commander in Chief. Taft believed that if the Senate did not protest ". . . we would have finally terminated for all time the right of Congress to declare war. . . ."[144] The bulk of Taft's address damned the Far Eastern policy of the Administration since World War II. Taft saw Truman's decisions as representing a change of policy in the Far East, which he endorsed, but with some concern over whether the crisis in Korea was the right time or place for such a change to take place. Taft may have weakened his argument somewhat by acknowledging during the course of his speech that should a joint resolution be offered asking the Congress to authorize the use of American military forces in Korea, he would vote in favor

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[142] Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3211. For the original text of the Senator's speech, see Congressional Record, Vol. 96, Pt. 7, June 28, 1950, 9319ff.

[143] Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3216.

[144] Ibid., 3217.

of the measure.[145]

The Administration reacted quickly to Taft's challenge, even though the Senator seemed to have little support for his position. Less than a week later, Congressmen received copies of a lengthy memorandum, dated July 3, 1950, "on the authority of the President to repel the attack in Korea."[146] The memorandum cited volumes of historical and legal precedents to justify the President's decision to use force in Korea. It offered as further justification, the membership of the United States in the United Nations and the resolutions of the Security Council, June 25 and 27. The North Korean aggression had to be met, the memorandum argued, because it constituted a threat not only to international peace, but to the peace and security of the United States and the security of United States forces in the Pacific area. Concluding,

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[145] Ibid., 3211. Taft's speech and a rebuttal by Senator Paul R. Douglas (Democrat, Illinois), are excerpted in Doc. No. 28, Senate Debate of the Commander in Chief's Authority," John P. Roche and Leonard W. Levy (eds.), The Presidency (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1964), 199-205. Hereinafter cited as Roche and Levy (eds.), The Presidency. For other commentary and analysis of Taft's speech, see New York Times, June 29, 1950; Paige, Korean Decision, 216-21; Warren, President as World Leader, 337-38; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 410; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 62-64; LaFeber, America, Russia, and the Cold War, 99.

[146] Text of the memorandum appears twice in the Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3198-3204, 3373-81. It is also published in Background Information on the Use of United States Armed Forces in Foreign Countries, Appendix I, 49-54.

the memorandum reads:

> These interests of the United States are interests which the President as Commander in Chief can protect by the employment of the Armed Forces of the United States without a declaration of war. It was they which the President's order of June 27 did protect. This order was within his authority as Commander in Chief.[147]

The military situation continued to worsen. Virtually unimpeded, a column of North Korean tanks entered Seoul on June 26 (Washington time). A spokesman for Rhee's Government, which had to flee the city, said that the Korean President ". . . is greatly disappointed with American aid; coming as late as it has it is very difficult to save anything. We have nothing to stop those tanks."[148] On June 27, MacArthur's headquarters announced that American combat aircraft were engaged in bombing and strafing missions south of the thirty-eighth parallel in support of South Korean ground forces. U.S. naval forces were also engaged in limited action below the parallel. During the day, four Russian-built, North Korean (YAK) fighters were shot down over Seoul by American aircraft.

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[147] Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3381.

[148] New York Times, June 29, 1950. The Korean Army--less than 100,000 strong--had no combat aircraft, tanks, or heavy artillery and few anti-tank weapons. The ROK Navy was a farcial flotilla, consisting mainly of light patrol craft of World War II vintage. Hanson W. Baldwin, New York Times, June 27, 1950.

The North Korean advance was temporarily stalled.[149] One conclusion emerges from these combat reports: Truman ordered U.S. forces into combat in support of the South Korean armies prior to the passage of the Security Council resolution requesting member nations to intervene militarily. That resolution was not passed until late in the evening of the twenty-seventh.

Warren Austin, the U.S. representative at the United Nations, addressed the Security Council on Tuesday afternoon, June 27. Austin told the other delegates that North Korea's failure to accept their resolution of June 25 constituted an attack upon the United Nations itself. He informed the Council that the United States stood ready to provide military aid to South Korea. Austin then offered a resolution asking member nations to provide South Korea with the forces necessary to repel the attack.[150] After long delays while the Indian and Egyptian delegates vainly attempted to receive voting instructions from their governments, at 10:45 P.M. the Security Council adopted the American-sponsored resolution seven to one, with two

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[149]Lindesay Parrott, ibid., June 28, 1950.

[150]Doc. No. 15, Statement, Austin to the Security Council, June 27, 1950, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 23-24. The text of Austin's statement may also be found in the New York Times, June 28, 1950; Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3370-71; Paige (ed.), 1950: Truman's Decision, 105-107.

abstentions. The operative line of the document recommended ". . . that the Members of the United Nations furnish such assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security in the area."[151]

That Truman sent American forces into combat before the sanctifying resolution was even proposed, thus presenting the Security Council with a fait accompli, is true, but of little consequence. The State Department had every assurance that the resolution would be approved that day. Additionally, a very braod interpretation of the June 25 resolution might be taken as justification for military intervention by U.N. members.[152] It would certainly seem an overdrawn statement to assert, as one writer has: "The Truman Administration had been stampeded, and it in turn

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[151]Doc. No. 16, Security Council Resolution, June 27, 1950, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 24. Text is also printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 986; Pt. 5, 3371: New York Times, June 28, 1950; Allen Guttman (ed.), Korea and the Theory of Limited War (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1967), 2-3. Hereinafter cited as Guttman (ed.), Korea and the Theory of Limited War. In the voting, Yugoslavia cast the dissenting vote and India and Egypt abstained. India approved two days later. The Soviet Union was absent as it had been since a boycott begun in January, 1950. Warner, "How Korea Decision Was Made," 104.

[152]Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 580-81. See also, Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 36; Fleming, The Cold War, II, 602.

stampeded the United Nations."[153]

In the 1951 hearings on MacArthur's dismissal, General Bradley told Senator Byrd that the United States entered the fighting following the resolution of June 27. Byrd retorted by reading part of a paraphrase of the JCS orders to MacArthur: "Instructions furnished CINCFE . . . 26 June 1950 provided for the employment of United States naval and air forces against North Korean units south of the thirty-eighth parallel."[154] Bradley then acknowledged that some forces were in combat prior to the resolution, but only to cover the evacuation of American nationals.[155] With a little more candor, Acheson has acknowledged in his memoirs that military action had been ordered, "and possibly taken," prior to the June 27 resolution.[156]

The combat reports received in Washington on Wednesday gave little cause for optimism. The South Korean forces driven from Seoul on Tuesday, had continued a "demoralized retreat" during the night. Early on June 28 (Washington time) the Korean forces were reportedly

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[153]I. F. Stone, The Hidden History of the Korean War (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1952), 75. Hereinafter cited as Stone, Hidden History of Korean War.

[154]Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 992. CINCFE is a military acronym for one of MacArthur's titles, "Commander in Chief, Far East."

[155]Ibid., 992-93.

[156]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 408.

holding the enemy advance in check at the Han River, south of the capital. One report reaching Washington indicated that two of the seven understrength ROK divisions had "disintegrated." U.S. B-29 bombers attacked Kimpo airfield (near Seoul) while jet fighters were seeing action against North Korean tanks and troops. The American jets were not able to provide close support for ground troops because no direct ground-to-air communications had yet been established.[157]

The President met with the National Security Council on the afternoon of June 28. This was a regularly-scheduled meeting of the NSC. Truman had not seen fit to call this body into special session since the Korean crisis had begun. The President began the meeting with a brief review of the bleak military picture in Korea. Vice President Barkley, arriving late, informed Truman that the draft extension bill had just cleared the Senate by a unanimous vote.[158] This meant that both houses of the Congress had shown almost total unanimity in conferring greater military authority on the President. Acheson cautioned that the present enthusiasm would wither away if Americans began to die and taxes rise because of Korea. "The President, mistaking my purpose," Acheson

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[157] New York Times, June 29, 1950; Warner, "How Korea Decision Was Made," 104-105.

[158] Truman, Memoirs, II, 340.

recalls, ". . . insisted that we could not back out of the course upon which we had started."[159]

The remainder of the Security Council meeting dealt with the probable intentions of the Soviet Union and the desirability of making Administration policy clear to MacArthur. Truman and many others were anticipating that the Soviet Union would take overt action somewhere in the world in order to capitalize on American preoccupation with Korea. Another consideration was direct military involvement by the Soviet Union in the fighting in Korea, particularly since the United States had entered the conflict. Army Secretary Pace told Truman that he had instructed military intelligence to be especially alert for signs of a Soviet move into Korea. Truman told Pace that he had already ordered an intensification of strategic intelligence efforts in the areas of northern Europe, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. The President also ordered a thorough reappraisal of American policies in all areas continguous with the U.S.S.R.[160]

During the NSC meeting of June 28, Air Force Secretary Thomas Finletter suggested to the President that General Vandenberg be sent to Tokyo to personally instruct

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[159]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 411; Truman, Memoirs, II, 340.

[160]Truman, Memoirs, II, 340-41. See also, McLellan and Reuss, "Foreign and Military Policies," 75.

MacArthur in the strategic thinking of the Administration. Finletter was concerned that MacArthur might err in an initial response to new developments in Korea without such instructions. However, Truman vetoed this suggestion on the grounds that he needed the Chiefs of Staff with him in Washington during this crisis.[161] Recalling this discussion in his Memoirs, Truman clearly had in mind his later confrontation with MacArthur when he added:

> . . . I understood the need for mutual understanding between Washington and Tokyo and expressed my regret that General MacArthur had so consistently declined all invitations to return to the United States for even a short visit. There had been no opportunity for him to meet me as Commander in Chief. I felt that if the Korean conflict was prolonged I would want to see General MacArthur.[162]

The limited records available do not indicate whether or not the subject of employing American ground forces in Korea was discussed in the National Security Council session on June 28. It is known that General John Church had reported to MacArthur from the scene on Wednesday (Korean time), his belief that the thirty-eighth parallel could not be restored as the boundary line without the use of United States ground combat forces.[163]

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[161]Truman, Memoirs, II, 340-41. Finletter was correct. As described later, without requesting authority to do so, MacArthur will order the Air Force to attack targets north of the thirty-eighth parallel.

[162]Ibid., 341.

[163]Paige, Korean Decision, 223-24. See also, Acheson, Present at the Creation, 411.

Some indication that the use of infantry may have been discussed appears in an article published in the New York Times the following morning. Written by Hanson W. Baldwin, the distinguished military analyst, shortly after the Security Council adjourned, the article bears the headline: "Ground Aid in Korea: Use of U.S. Troops Considered to Bolster Weak Southern Army." Considering the decision reached two days later, Baldwin displayed an amazing prescience or access to someone in the inner circles of the Administration:

> The probability that United States ground troops will have to be employed in Korea if the North Korean Communists are to be driven back to the Thirty-eighth Parallel increased by the hour today. . . .
>
> If the invading forces cannot be held north of the Han River . . . another defensive position of some strength runs about across the center of Southern Korea to the coast. A final line lies in a great semi-circular arc in front of Pusan on the southeast coast.
>
> The next few days--particularly the operations tomorrow--will probably determine whether or not the intervention of United States ground combat forces will be necessary. Such intervention should be avoided, on military grounds, if possible. . . .
>
> However, the political necessity for prompt intervention--if the South Korean ground armies melt away--is clear; once our hand had been laid to the plow we cannot turn back. Moreover, in a military sense, prompt and decisive action to force the invaders back to the Thirty-Eighth Parallel is deemed of great importance; what we want to avoid in Korea is a protracted wearing campaign of attrition which would gradually such (sic., suck) in greater and greater United States' strength, and might result in a sort of Spanish Civil War condition.[164]

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[164]Hanson Baldwin, New York Times, June 29, 1950.

Baldwin continued with the same theme in an article written on the twenty-ninth. The journalist claimed that two tentative answers had been proposed in the event that the South Koreans could not repel the North Korean forces, a result which now seemed certain. First, Truman could authorize his air and naval forces to operate north of the thirty-eighth parallel against air fields and weapons dumps. Second, the President could commit American ground elements to combat. While Baldwin considered these to be "unhappy alternatives," he particularly saw great disadvantages in extending the fighting into North Korea. It was his opinion that such operations would have psychological and political repercussions; serve to unify the North Koreans against the United States; cause questions as to the legality of American intervention and, while widening the war, provided no guarantee that the war would be brought to a rapid and decisive solution. "There is a growing conviction here (in Washington)," Baldwin concluded, "that more quick and decisive action in the form of one or both courses may be necessary in the next few days. . . ."[165] What Baldwin did not know was that both decisions had already been taken before his article appeared the next morning.

General MacArthur flew to Korea from Tokyo at dawn,

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[165]Ibid., June 30, 1950.

June 29 (Korean time). At some point in the flight he dictated an order to Lt. General George E. Stratemeyer to be sent by radiogram to Major General Earl E. Partridge, who, in Stratemeyer's absence, was commanding the Far East Air Force. The order read: "Stratemeyer to Partridge: Take out North Korean Airfield immediately. No publicity. MacArthur approves."[166] The Far East Commander took this action without consultation or approval from Washington.[167] General Whitney, who was on the flight to Korea, explained that MacArthur felt that allowing North Korea a sanctuary beyond the thirty-eighth parallel ". . . would not be giving to the South Korean defenders the 'effective military assistance' that the U.N. had directed him to give. He concluded . . . that implicit in his directive was the discretion normal to field command."[168] MacArthur was, of course, never actually under the "direction" of the United Nations. The directive from his superiors in Washington had specifically drawn the thirty-eighth parallel as the outer limits of U.S. military activity.

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[166]Appleman, South to the Naktong, 44. According to United Press reports from London, Soviet and North Korean radio broadcasts charged, on June 29, that U.S. B-29's were bombing Pyongyang, North Korea. Washington denied these reports. Lindesay Parrott, New York Times, June 30, 1950.

[167]Collins, War in Peacetime, 18-19; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 581.

[168]Whitney, MacArthur, 326.

"Here was no timid delay while authorization was obtained from Washington, here was the capacity for command decision and the readiness to assume responsibility which had always been MacArthur's forte."[169] There is no record of any countermanding order or message of censure from Washington.[170] Instead, less than twenty-four hours later, the President sent MacArthur authorization to do precisely what he had already done.

The reports arriving in Washington from Korea on Thursday, June 29, continued to describe the ROK position as desperate. The North Koreans were massing along the Han River for another push southward. The South Korean army was sustaining very heavy casualties and its ability to continue resistance was diminishing hourly. Shortly before noon, Secretary Johnson called Truman to suggest that he hold another meeting with the National Security Council. The President agreed, and the meeting was scheduled for 5:00 that evening.[171]

One hour before his meeting with the NSC, Truman held his regular weekly press conference, the first since

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[169] Ibid.; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 27-28.

[170] Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 581.

[171] Lindesay Parrott, New York Times, June 30, 1950. See also, Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 86; Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, 86; Goldman, Crucial Decade, 165-66.

the crisis in Korea erupted. In response to a reporter's question, Truman said that the United States was not at war. Asked to elaborate, he said that South Korea had been ". . . unlawfully attacked by a bunch of bandits."[172] The United States was one of the members of the United Nations aiding in the relief of Korea. A reporter then asked if it would be accurate to refer to American assistance as a "police action" under the aegis of the United Nations. "That is exactly what it amounts to," was the President's reply.[173] The unfortunate phrase became part of the language and a source of embarrassment to Truman. The President was concerned that action in Korea be undertaken through the United Nations with the active involvement of as many other nations as possible. He revealed this concern for emphasizing that Korea was an act of collective security in a personal letter written in July: "Every effort is being made to line up the United Nations in a practical way on our side. I hope we can get it worked out so that all the allies on our side will be

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[172]Item No. 179, Press Conference, June 29, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 504.

[173]Ibid., 504-5; Anthony Leviero, New York Times, June 30, 1950. In a press conference on July 13, a reporter asked Truman if he would still call the Korean fighting a "police action." His reply was, "Yes, it is still a police action." Item No. 191, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 522.

in the fight."[174]

In the Security Council meeting following his press conference, Truman listened as Secretary of Defense Johnson presented the text of a proposed directive to MacArthur which had been drafted by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Johnson said that the major difficulties encountered by United States' forces in carrying out the assigned mission of aiding Korea were many: a lack of proper ground-air liaison existed between American fighters and the ROK Army; support missions being flown from Japan could spend only minutes over Korea because of fuel expenditure on the long flights; transportation facilities available in Korea made supplying American munitions difficult; the prohibition of aerial and naval operations above the thirty-eighth parallel provided the enemy with a sanctuary and secure base of supply.[175] The directive proposed to offset these disadvantages by allowing MacArthur to strike above the thirty-eighth parallel (the conferees being apparently unaware MacArthur had already given such an order), by allowing the use of Army service units of the Signal Corps and transport companies to provide air-ground communication

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[174]Truman to Harry I. Schwimmer, July 12, 1950, Truman Papers, OF, 471-B, Korean Emergency, Truman Library.

[175]Paige, Korean Decision, 245. See also, Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 86; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 300-301.

and transport of munitions, and by allowing the use of Army combat forces to be stationed in the Pusan-Chinhae area to protect the port and guard an airfield to be used by American fighter aircraft.[176]

In the general discussion that followed Johnson's presentation, the proposed directive underwent substantial revision. Both Secretary Pace and Truman were reluctant to allow a blanket endorsement for military action in North Korea. Truman also deleted some lines from the directive that allowed the implication the United States was planning for war with the Soviet Union: "I stated categorically that I did not wish to see even the slightest implication of such a plan."[177] After other modifications the President approved the directive for MacArthur, the major decisions being that military operations against North Korea were permitted and that the first ground combat units were committed, although not for actual combat purposes, since the Pusan area was some two hundred miles south of the existing battle lines.[178] A paraphrase of

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[176]Truman, Memoirs, II, 341. See also, Warner, "How Korea Decision Was Made," 105; Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 86; Paige, Korean Decision, 245; Collins, War in Peacetime, 19-20.

[177]Truman, Memoirs, II, 341.

[178]Ibid., 341-42. See also, Acheson, Present at the Creation, 411-12; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 301; Goldman, Crucial Decade, 167; Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 88; Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, 87; Alexander

the original directive approved by Truman on the twenty-ninth reads:

> . . . you will provide fullest possible support for South Korean forces by attack on military targets so as to permit these forces to clear South Korea of North Korean forces.
>
> Employment of Army forces will be limited to essential communications and other essential service units except that you are authorized to employ such Army combat and service forces as to insure the retention of a port and air base in the general area of Pusan-Chinhae. . . .
>
> You are authorized to extend your operations in Northern Korea against air bases, depots, tanks, farms, troop columns, and other purely military targets, if and when this becomes essential for the performance of your mission. . . . Special care will be taken to insure that operations in North Korea stay well clear of the frontiers of Manchuria or the Soviet Union.
>
> The decision to commit United States air and naval forces to provide cover and support for South Korean troops does not constitute a decision to engage in war with the Soviet Union if Soviet forces intervene in Korea. . . . If Soviet forces actively oppose our operations in Korea, your forces should defend themselves but should take no action to aggravate the situation, and you should report the situation to Washington.[179]

Later in the evening of June 29, Acheson called upon Truman to deliver to him the text of an offer just received from President Chiang Kai-shek. The Generalissimo offered to provide 33,000 combat troops to South

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L. George, "American Policy-Making and the North Korean Aggression," in Guttman (ed.), Korea and the Theory of Limited War, 73. Hereinafter cited as George, "American Policy-Making."

[179]Marshall testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 536. See also, Appleman, South to the Naktong, 46; Paige, Korean Decision, 250-51; Paige (ed.), 1950: Truman's Decision, 150-51.

Korea. The offer was apparently contingent upon American willingness to provide the transportation necessary from Formosa.[180] In his eagerness to involve other U.N. member nations in the Korean fighting, Truman wanted to accept the offer immediately. Acheson opposed this, arguing that the Chinese were probably not properly equipped and that they performed a much more valuable service by protecting Formosa, which was vulnerable to attack from the Chinese mainland. While Truman was still disposed to accepting the offer, he agreed to postpone a decision until a conference the following day with Acheson, Johnson and the Joint Chiefs.[181]

While these deliberations were going on in Washington, MacArthur was completing a personal reconnaissance of the Korean battlefield. The General later recalled that the battlefront scenes he witnessed convinced him that the South Koreans had already depleted their defensive potential. American naval and air support was not sufficient to reverse the tide: "Only the immediate

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[180]Docs. No. 89, 90, Chinese Embassy to Department of State, June 29, 30, 1950, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 59-60. Documents are also published in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3382-83.

[181]Truman, Memoirs, II, 342; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 412. See also, Paige, Korean Decision, 249. General MacArthur did not want the Formosan troops when they were originally offered. See Bradley's testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 652; Truman, Memoirs, II, 348.

commitment of ground troops could possibly do so. The answer I had come to seek was there. I would throw my occupation soldiers into this breach."[182] On the flight back to Tokyo, MacArthur drafted his report to the Pentagon. It called for a commitment to Korea far greater than most of Truman's advisers had anticipated five days earlier.

About three o'clock on Friday morning, June 30, the Pentagon received a cable from MacArthur reporting on his inspection trip to Korea. The General said that the ROK forces were disorganized and ill-equipped to repel the North Korean invaders. Unless some new factor was introduced, there was nothing to prevent the conquest of the entire peninsula. MacArthur felt that the only way to stop the North Korean advance and retake the lost ground was by employing United States ground combat forces. The cable concluded with a dire warning: "Unless provision is made for the full utilization of the Army-Navy-Air team . . . our mission will at best be needlessly costly in life, money and prestige. At worst, it might be doomed."[183]

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[182]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 333. See also, Whitney, MacArthur, 329; Hunt, Untold Story of Douglas MacArthur, 452.

[183]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 334. The text of MacArthur's cable is also published in Paige (ed.), 1950: Truman's Decision, 159-60. See also, Fehrenbach, This

The duty officer at the Pentagon immediately informed General Collins, the Army Chief of Staff, of the nature of MacArthur's message. Collins ordered that a telecon circuit be established with Tokyo so that he might talk (by teletype) with MacArthur. In the course of their exchange, MacArthur insisted that he needed immediate authorization for the use of combat troops if the situation were to be saved. Collins replied that the President had shown considerable reluctance the previous day to using ground forces in Korea and that he was sure that Truman would want to consult further with his military advisers before making such a decision. This would take several hours. Collins suggested that the directive of June 29 just sent to MacArthur might be sufficient. The General replied that he needed new instructions at once, since he proposed the immediate dispatch of a regimental combat team from Japan to the Korean front. MacArthur added that he planned to build up to a strength of two divisions in order to launch a counteroffensive.[184] After repeated

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Kind of War, 89; Paige, Korean Decision, 237-38; Whitney, MacArthur, 332-33; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 303; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 26-27.

[184]Collins, War in Peacetime, 21-22; Appleman, South in the Naktong, 47. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 581; Paige, Korean Decision, 255; Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 88. General Bradley testified in 1951: ". . . you might say we underestimated their numbers, and their equipment and their ability to fight . . . at least to start with." Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 948.

urgings from General MacArthur, Collins said he would try to contact the President through the Secretary of the Army, Frank Pace.

Truman received a call from Secretary Pace shortly before five o'clock. Pace explained the substance of MacArthur's messages from Tokyo, stressing that the General was emphatic in his insistance that a combat troop authorization was of the utmost urgency. The Army Secretary asked Truman for instructions: "I told Pace to inform General MacArthur immediately that the use of one regimental combat team was approved."[185] Within moments the command decision Truman had reached alone in his bedroom at Blair House had been relayed to MacArthur. Within two hours, the first units of the combat regiment began arriving by airlift at Pusan.[186]

Colonel Henry Ahalt of the Joint Staff came to Blair House from the Pentagon at seven o'clock to brief

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[185]Truman, Memoirs, II, 343; Harold Hinton, New York Times, July 1, 1950; Richard H. Rovere and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., The General and the President and the Future of American Foreign Policy (New York: Farrar, Straus and Young, 1951), 106. Hereinafter cited as Rovere and Schlesinger, The General and the President. See also, Goldman, Crucial Decade, 168-69; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 304; Hunt, Untold Story of Douglas MacArthur, 453; Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 235-36; Pt. 2, 1122, 1476.

[186]Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 88. One of MacArthur's biographers will later claim that Far East Headquarters had not been consulted, ". . . when suddenly General MacArthur received orders from Truman to intervene." Willoughby and Chamberlain, MacArthur, 355.

the President fully on all of the telegraphic conversations and the existing military situation in Korea. As soon as the briefing was completed, Truman called Secretary Johnson and said that he wanted a full-scale conference with his military and diplomatic advisers (the original Blair House conferees) in his office in two and a half hours. The President said his advisers should be prepared to discuss and make recommendations on MacArthur's request for two combat divisions and on the Nationalist Chinese troop offer.[187]

The June 30 conference began with Truman asking his advisers if it would be worthwhile to accept the 33,000 troops offered by Chiang Kai-shek. Acheson was against the idea for the reasons expressed to Truman the previous evening. Additionally, he felt their use might encourage the Red Chinese to intervene in Korea. The Joint Chiefs were agreed that the best of Chiang's troops were not properly equipped or trained for modern combat operations. They believed that the available transport could be better used to transfer American forces to Korea. "I accepted," Truman wrote later, "the position taken by practically everyone else at this meeting; namely, that

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[187]Truman, Memoirs, II, 343.

the Chinese offer ought to be politely declined."[188]

The discussion of committing other divisions into combat was brief. There is no record of any adviser present dissenting from the view that MacArthur should be allowed to use available United States infantry forces to stop the North Korean advance. Truman ordered that the limitations imposed upon American ground troop use in the directive of the previous evening be rescinded and that MacArthur be given full discretionary authority to use the ground forces of his command in Korea. The order did not limit MacArthur to the two divisions which he had requested. At Admiral Sherman's suggestion, Truman also approved a second order to the Far East Command, establishing a naval blockade of the entire coastline of North Korea.[189] The meeting was over in thirty minutes. There seems to have been little consideration given to the eventual cost in lives and treasure that could and did ensue from this decision. The employment of land armies

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[188] Ibid. See also, Acheson, Present at the Creation, 412; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 28-29; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 33. For text of the State Department note declining the Nationalist Chinese offer, see Doc. No. 91, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 60-61; Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3383.

[189] Truman, Memoirs, II, 343; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 412. See also, Collins, War in Peacetime, 23; Paige, Korean Decision, 259-60; Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, 90; Appleman, South to the Naktong, 47; Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 88.

on foreign soil is prone by nature to be regarded as an irrevocable commitment. This distinction is not accorded to aerial and naval combat, probably because of their remote and impersonal character.[190]

The President met with the congressional leadership at eleven o'clock in order to inform them of the decisions he had just reached. Some thirty officials of the Administration were joined in the Cabinet Room of the White House by fifteen senators and representatives.[191] Truman began the meeting by summarizing the actions taken by both the United States and the United Nations during the preceding five days. The President then acquainted the gathering with the latest battle reports from Korea, which described an increasingly desperate general retreat by the South Korean forces. Truman then told the congressional leaders of his recent decision to send in combat units. There was a stunned silence, followed by several comments indicating general approval.[192]

A few of the members of Congress present registered varying degrees of disapproval with the way Truman had

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[190]For an interesting speculative analysis of the thinking of the policy-makers at this meeting, see George, "American Policy-Making," 74-75.

[191]For a list of the congressmen in attendance see Paige, Korean Decision, 262.

[192]Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 88; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 413.

decided, but none challenged the decision itself. Senator Connally, not by way of censure, but "for the record," asked Truman if this were a unilateral action by the United States, or in support of the U.N. resolutions. The President assured him that this step was taken in concert with the United Nations.[193] Senator Kenneth Wherry challenged the legal authority of the Commander in Chief to make such a decision without the consent of Congress. Truman replied that this was an emergency situation requiring immediate action; that it was his duty to act and he had.[194] Senator Alexander Smith suggested that Truman could still seek a congressional resolution approving his decision and the President agreed to consider such a step. Wherry began again to question Truman's right to act, but he was cut off by Representative Dewey Short, the ranking Republican on the Armed Services Committee. Short told Truman that he was certain he spoke for "practically everyone in Congress" in thanking the President for the quality of his leadership in the present crisis. On that note, the meeting adjourned.[195]

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[193]Paige, Korean Decision, 262. For the text of Ambassador Austin's statement to the Security Council later the same day explaining the American action, see Doc. No. 18, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 25-27.

[194]Smith, "Why We Went to War in Korea," 88.

[195]Ibid. See also, Acheson, Present at the Creation, 413; Paige, Korean Decision, 262-63.

Just as the meeting was ending, the White House released the following presidential statement;

> At a meeting with Congressional leaders at the White House this morning, the President, together with the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, reviewed with them the latest developments of the situation in Korea. The Congressional leaders were given a full review of the intensified military activities.
>
> In keeping with the United Nations Security Council's request for support to the Republic of Korea, the President announced that he had authorized the United States Air Force to conduct missions on specific military targets in Northern Korea wherever militarily necessary, and has ordered a Naval blockade of the entire Korean coast. General MacArthur has been authorized to use certain supporting ground units.[196]

The last sentence of the release was deliberately left vague, for reasons of security. However, the congressional leaders were told very little more than that in the meeting with regard to the number of troops that were to be committed or how they would be employed.[197]

The decisions made on Friday morning, June 30, were conclusive: Truman had committed the United States to the defense of South Korea. He found no difficulty in explaining why: "We could not stand idly by and allow

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[196]White House Press Release No. 2454, June 30, 1950, copy in Tannenwald Papers, Subject File, Chronology, MacArthur Hearings, Truman Library. For text of this statement see Item No. 184, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 513; Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 987; Pt. 5, 3372; Doc. No. 17, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 24-25; Paige (ed.), 1950: Truman's Decision, 161-62.

[197]Paige, Korean Decision, 263-64.

the Communist imperialists to assume that they were free to go into Korea or elsewhere. This challenge had to be met--and it was met."[198] But the President, in meeting this challenge, went to great lengths to point out that the United States was merely acting as a member of the United Nations, diligently upholding the principle of collective security. In truth, considerations of power politics and the American doctrine of containment weighed heavily in the decision to intervene. As Robert Osgood phrased it: ". . . our eagerness to represent American intervention as an altruistic act of pure collective security tended to obscure the underlying basis of Realpolitik without which intervention, regardless of UN sanction, would have been unjustified."[199]

There is no reason to doubt that Truman's decision to intervene in Korea was initially accorded strong public acceptance. As measured by public opinion pollsters,

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[198]Truman, Memoirs, II, 464. General Bradley, testifying in 1951, demonstrated complete accord with Truman's sentiments. Asked why the United States intervened, he said that everyone was in agreement that this was an act of aggression that had to be met. Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 890. Similar views were expressed by former Secretary Johnson in his testimony. See ibid., Pt. 4, 2585. See also, General Vandenberg's testimony, ibid., Pt. 2, 1490.

[199]Osgood, Limited War, 167. D. F. Fleming would agree with Osgood, adding that the failure of the Truman Doctrine in China endangered Truman's European policy as well as his political base in America. Thus, he could not afford another defeat in Asia. The Cold War, II, 602-603.

Truman's popularity was at one of its lowest points just prior to the Korean crisis. The Gallup Poll taken a few days before the fighting began listed thirty-seven percent of the public approving of his leadership.[200] The record indicates that the President was under no significant pressure from either domestic or foreign sources either to intervene or stay out of the Korean conflict. Also, it is known that Truman deliberately excluded any consideration of domestic political repercussions from the conferences held during the week in which these decisions were made. It is possible, that as an old political hand, he knew intuitively that his decision would receive strong public support.[201] In any event, such was the case. A Roper Poll taken in August 1950 claimed that a total of seventy-three percent of the people agreed that Truman was right in sending the troops into Korea.[202] Journalist Arthur Krock wrote prophetically on July 1, 1950, that eventually the American people would, ". . . call for a reckoning by the transfer of office and power. But few among these are disturbing the indispensable unity

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[200]Cited in Paige, Korean Decision, 45.

[201]Ibid., 289, 304-305, 310-11.

[202]Fifteen percent disagreed and twelve percent had no opinion. Roper, You and Your Leaders, 145. In 1952, Truman told a reporter that the decision to intervene was backed by "almost" ninety percent of the American people. Edward T. Folliard, Washington Post, December 27, 1952.

of the moment, or contending that in the circumstances the President could have done otherwise."[203]

This military intervention in Korea, that Truman later called his "toughest" decision,[204] was made without calling on the National Security Council, which his unification reforms had established as the primary advisory body on major military and foreign policy decisions.[205] The NSC did not have contingency plans available, because the Korean peninsula had not been included in long-range strategic planning.[206] The deliberative process of the NSC, in which policy recommendations evolve gradually from a series of position papers drafted by several agencies which must be coordinated at several administrative levels, was too time-consuming to be utilized in a crisis requiring immediate decisions. However, even while Truman bypassed his Security Council for the sake of expediency, almost all of the members of that body were present at the five informal meetings from which these

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[203]Krock, "Korea: Truman's Leadership," New York Times, July 1, 1950, reprinted in Krock, In the Nation, 184.

[204]Ernest B. Vaccaro, New York Herald-Tribune, December 27, 1952. See also, Warren, President as World Leader, 335.

[205]Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 579.

[206]Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 22.

major military policy decisions emerged. The President preferred to work through the conventional staff and command structure created by his administration, but he was flexible and confident enough to find ad hoc solutions in an emergency condition.[207]

The President's decision to forego asking Congress for an authorization to intervene in Korea has far more profound implications than his decision to ignore the formal machinery of the National Security Council. Truman bypassed Congress on the advice of Secretary Acheson: "I . . . recommended that the President should not ask for a resolution of approval, but rest on his constitutional authority as Commander in Chief of the armed forces."[208] As with the decision not to involve the NSC, the President may have been motivated by pressing considerations of time.[209] Certainly historical precedent supports the commander in chief's prerogative of

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[207]Hoare, "Truman," 190-91; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 579.

[208]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 413-15. See also, Paige, Korean Decision, 289.

[209]Senator Tom Connally had told Truman on June 26 that a request to Congress for authorization would be ill-advised because of the possibility of extended debate. See Paige, Korean Decision, 305-306.

committing troops without prior approval of Congress.[210] However, it is difficult to comprehend why Truman did not ask Congress to sanction his decisions after they were made. In the first weeks of the war, with the nation responding with generous ardor, aflush with crusading zeal at yet another opporunity to safeguard democracy, the consent of Congress was an absolute certainty.[211] Since Truman chose to act alone, he also stood alone as the martial spirit faded from the nation when confronted by the bitter reality of defeat in the hills of Korea.

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[210] See Chapter One, passim. Merlo Pusey has written that Truman's failure to obtain congressional approval for the Korean intervention violated the United Nations Participation Act and stands as a precedent which imperils democracy and impedes establishment of a sound system of collective security. See Merlo J. Pusey, The Way We Go To War (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969), 79-95, passim. Hereinafter cited as Pusey, Way We Go To War. Raymond G. O'Connor considered Truman's refusal to secure a declaration of war from Congress to be, "among the innovations" made by the President during the Korean War. See "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 73.

[211] Senator Richard B. Russell said (in 1962) that if the Administration had requested congressional approval after the first troops went in, ". . . it would have been granted unanimously." Quoted in Pusey, Way We Go To War, 111.

# CHAPTER VIII

## THE PRESIDENT AND THE WAR

> I pinned a medal on General MacArthur the other day, and told him I wished I had a medal like that, and he said that it was my duty to give the medals, not to receive them. That is always the way. About all I receive are the bricks.[1]

Once the decision was made to intervene in Korea, Truman established a procedural system wherein he kept a close supervisory control over the conduct of the war. Each morning at about ten o'clock, General Bradley or an officer from the Joint Staff would call on the President and provide him with a full briefing on the battle reports received from Korea in the preceding twenty-four hours.[2] As Commander in Chief, Truman insisted that all directives concerning the Korean War, except those involving the most routine of matters, had to be presented to him for approval prior to their being transmitted to the Far

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[1] Item No. 272, Remarks to Members of the National Guard Association, October 25, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 688.

[2] Truman, Memoirs, II, 344. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 583; O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 69. When military activity had scaled down considerably, these briefings were cut to three per week. Hoare, "Truman," 194.

East Command.[3]

The day-to-day strategic direction of the war was handled by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Since the war was limited in scope and area, the JCS were able to function calmly and efficiently. Military problems were referred to the JCS from the Far East Command, the United Nations Command, the National Security Council, the three service Secretaries and the State Department. These problems were then channeled to the Joint Staff for deliberation and the drafting of a paper. The JCS would then consider the paper's proposals. If their decision necessitated a directive to the Commander in Chief, Far East (CINCFE), it was transmitted to the Secretary of Defense for approval. Then the directive was sent through the National Security Council to the President. If Truman assented, the order was then forwarded to the theater commander by the Joint Chiefs. While very few commands to the military bore Truman's name, they all were cleared through him.[4] For the remainder of his Presidency, Truman never slackened this close control. He considered it part of his function as Commander in Chief to make all final decisions and

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[3]Hoare, "Truman," 194; Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 53.

[4]Hoare, "Truman," 193-94. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 582-83; Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 53, 55-56.

approve all strategic plans dealing with the fighting in Korea. Truman's military chiefs and his civilian administrators in the Pentagon clearly assumed a subordinate role under the President's style of leadership. As Wilber Hoare wrote in his essay on Truman as Commander in Chief: "The actions of the Secretary of Defense and of the JCS all fell into one of two categories--advice to the commander in chief or implementation of his directives."[5] The system worked because the civilian advisers and the military chiefs worked well together, free from most of the interservice bickering that had fragmented efforts at unified command in the past.[6]

From the very beginning of the war, Truman gave increased prestige and importance to the deliberations and recommendations of the National Security Council. The President ordered the NSC to meet weekly and he regularly sat in on these sessions, a practice he had deliberately

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[5]Hoare, "Truman," 199.

[6]Ibid., 195-96. During most of the Korean War the following men constituted the civilian-military hierarchy of the Pentagon: George C. Marshall, Secretary of Defense; Frank Pace, Jr., Secretary of the Army; Francis P. Matthews, Secretary of the Navy; Thomas K. Finletter, Secretary of the Air Force; General Omar N. Bradley, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; General J. Lawton Collins, Army Chief of Staff; General Hoyt S. Vandenberg, Air Force Chief of Staff; Admiral William M. Fechteler, who replaced Admiral Forrest P. Sherman who had died of a heart attack on July 22, 1951, Chief of Naval Operations.

avoided in the past.[7] On July 6, the first time the NSC met following the decision to send in land armies, Truman gave instructions to all present that he did not want unilateral proposals regarding Korea sent to him directly. He said that recommendations requiring presidential action must be transmitted to him through the machinery of the National Security Council.[8] Except in extraordinary circumstances, policy would be formulated and decisions made through this highly-institutionalized civil-military staff structure.[9]

The UN Security Council, recognizing the need for a unified command in Korea, as well as the predominant role played by the United States, passed a resolution on July 7, 1950. The resolution asked all members providing military assistance for Korea to integrate their forces into a single command directed by the United States.[10] In a

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[7]Truman, Memoirs, II, 344.

[8]George M. Elsey to Charles S. Murphy, July 7, 1950, Truman Papers, OF, 471-B - Korean Emergency, Truman Library.

[9]For a detailed description of the operation of the chain of command under Truman, see Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 582-83.

[10]For text of the Security Council resolution, see Doc. No. 90, United States Foreign Policy in the Korean Crisis, 66-67. See also, Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3372. The Soviet Union rejected the July 7 resolution as an illegal use of the United Nations to mask American aggression against the people of Korea. Doc. No. 101, Cable, Andrei A. Gromyko to Trygve Lie, July 11, 1950, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 67-68.

presidential statement released the following day, Truman designated General MacArthur as commanding general of the United Nations Command.[11] All other nations participating in assistance to Korea would amalgamate their forces under him. The process was completed on July 15 when MacArthur received a message from Korean President Rhee which granted the General full command authority over all land, sea and air forces of the Republic of Korea.[12]

General MacArthur, who was now seventy years old, shouldered an enormous burden. He was Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in Japan (SCAP), the single executive authority for the administration of the Japanese nation. He was Commander in Chief, Far East (CINCFE), the overall authority for all American military forces in the Far East. The General was also military governor of the Ryukyus Islands and was in technical control of all U.S. ground forces operating in the Far Eastern theatre. And now, as noted above, he was also Commander in Chief, United Nations Command (CINCUNC), exercising command

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[11]White House Press Release, July 8, 1950, copy in Tannenwald Papers, Subject File, Chronology, MacArthur Hearings, Truman Library. Truman's statement is printed as Item No. 189, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 520; Doc. No. 100, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 100; Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3372-73. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 347; MacArthur, Reminiscences, 337.

[12]Rhee to MacArthur, July 15, 1950, quoted in United States Policy in the Korean Conflict, 10-11.

responsibilities over the military forces of all nations operating in and around Korea.[13] MacArthur had uncomplainingly accepted this additional command although the sum of his existing responsibilities would have easily broken a far-younger, less-gifted man. When notified of his appointment to the United Nations Command he wrote to Truman: "I can only repeat the pledge of my complete personal loyalty to you as well as an absolute devotion to your monumental struggle for peace and good will throughout the world. I hope I will not fail you."[14]

The placing of all forces in Korea under a United Nations banner did not, in fact, substantially change anything. While Truman had to practice some restraint in order to maintain United Nations support of the Korean operations, the links in the chain of command remained the same. MacArthur still reported to the Army Chief of Staff (Collins) and through him to the JCS, Secretary of Defense, NSC and the Commander in Chief, who was not obliged to clear anything with the United Nations.[15]

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[13]MacArthur defined his commands during testimony in 1951. See Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 36-37. See also, American Military History, 550; Hunt, Untold Story of Douglas MacArthur, 456; Appleman, South to the Naktong, 112.

[14]Quoted in Whitney, MacArthur, 338.

[15]Hoare, "Truman," 194-95. See also, Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 53; O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 68-69; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 65.

support forces.[18] He reported that he found the enemy to be "both skillful and resourceful."[19] Intelligence estimates at the time held that the North Korean invading force numbered about ninety thousand. MacArthur had ten thousand Americans and twenty-five thousand ROK forces with which to meet the enemy.[20]

Reports coming in from the Far East Command during the second week of July continued to emphasize the need for more troops and the gross underestimation of the training and equipment of the North Korean People's Army. On the ninth, MacArthur informed the JCS that his tactical situation continued to worsen. He asked that four more divisions, with all components, be sent to him, over and above those already requisitioned. "The situation," MacArthur concluded, "has developed into a major operation."[21] On the sixteenth, General Collins, Army Chief of Staff, sent his own estimate of the tactical

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[18]Appleman, South to the Naktong, 118. See also, Ridgway, Korean War, 35; MacArthur, Reminscences, 337.

[19]MacArthur to Department of the Army, July 7, 1950, quoted in Appleman, South to the Naktong, 118.

[20]Truman, Memoirs, II, 344. For MacArthur's estimate of the training and quality of the South Korean and American forces at his command at the outset of the war, see his testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 4-5, 236-37.

[21]MacArthur to JCS, July 9, 1950, quoted in Appleman, South to the Naktong, 119.

MacArthur himself later testified: "Senator (Russell), my connection with the United Nations was largely nominal. . . . everything I did came from our own Chiefs of Staff. . . . I had no direct connection with the United Nations whatsoever."[16] Had the Administration been obliged to act through the UN Security Council, little would have been accomplished. On August 1 the Soviet Union ended a seven-month boycott of the sessions. Shortly thereafter the Soviet representative became president of the Council.[17]

By early July 1950 American ground troops were actively engaged in combat against the North Korean People's Army (NKPA). MacArthur became immediately aware that his first estimate of two divisions would be insufficient to repulse the aggressors. The General sent several requests to Washington for various infantry, airborne and Marine units, as well as three medium tank batallions and seven hundred more combat aircraft. Finally, on July 7, MacArthur told the Joint Chiefs that turning back the North Koreans would require four and a half full-strength infantry divisions and numerous other

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[16] Far East Hearings, Ft. 1, 10.

[17] Major Problems of United States Foreign Policy, 6.

position of the United Nations Command to Truman. Collins praised MacArthur's "magnificent leadership" and the effectiveness with which the General had committed and employed his forces. However, Collins added, the North Koreans are ". . . well-equipped, well-led, and battle-trained and . . . have at times out-numbered our troops by as much as twenty to one."[22]

While MacArthur was still certain that he had to have more troops at once, he was much more optimistic in a personal communication to Truman on July 19. He told the President that with the full deployment of the 8th Army having by then been accomplished, the possibility of a North Korean victory had ended. MacArthur said his hold upon southern Korea was not a "secure base" and that he anticipated being able to establish a final stabilization line. The General said that the NKPA had enjoyed the advantages of surprise, over-whelming force, speed and superior weapons. But the extraordinary speed with which Eighth Army had been deployed robbed the enemy of these advantages: "His supply line is insecure. He has had his great chance but failed to exploit it. We are now in

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[22]Collins to the Commander in Chief, July 16, 1950, Truman Papers, OF, 471-B - Korean Emergency, Truman Library.

Korea in force, and . . . we are there to stay. . . ."[23] MacArthur recalls being amazed when his initial request for more troops was denied by Washington. He was told that his request was disapproved because no increase in troop strength had been authorized, shipping was in short supply and there was a need to maintain the American military posture in other areas of the world. MacArthur dismissed this as faulty reasoning which placed the Far East on the bottom of the priority list. The General felt it should have been obvious, "even to the non- military mind" that Soviet military deployment in Eastern Europe was defensive, not offensive.[24] By way of rebuttal, Truman wrote in his memoirs that area commanders always lack a global perspective and believe that their command should receive top priority. The President said this was understandable to him because during World War I he had considered his artillery battery to be the center of the

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[23]MacArthur to Truman, July 19, 1950, Lloyd Files, Message to Congress and Speech re Korea, July 19, 1950, Truman Library. See also, "General MacArthur's Estimate of the Military Situation, July 11, 1950," Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3381-82; Item No. 194, Radio Address to the American People on the Situation in Korea, July 19, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, footnote, 542.

[24]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 337. MacArthur's statement can be contrasted with his testimony in 1951 when he said that the responsibility for global strategy rested with the JCS and other agencies in Washington and that he was not familiar with their studies. Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 76.

entire war effort and had continually fought for more consideration for his unit.[25]

The Administration had not completely disapproved MacArthur's recommendation, as he implied. Decision was postponed on any major commitment of American forces in Korea over and above the units performing occupational duties in the Far East. Truman was reluctant to engage a large body of troops without positive confirmation that the Soviet Union would not take action elsewhere in the world. To this end, he had asked the State and Defense Departments to consider the probable course of Soviet conduct and report to him at a Cabinet meeting on July 14, 1950. The report concluded that the Soviet Union possessed the military capability, either alone or in concert with satellite nations, of beginning a general war or applying pressure at numerous locations along common borders. Acheson told the President that Defense and State could not agree on which area the Soviets might select to apply military pressure. However, he told Truman that the two agencies were in complete agreement that there existed, ". . . the extreme danger of some such action flowing from either Soviet desire or the momentum of events."[26] Truman was also informed that should such military action occur,

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[25]Truman, Memoirs, II, 345.

[26]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 420-21.

the United States did not possess military power sufficient enough to make an adequate response.[27]

The report of the Secretaries of State and Defense recommended that Truman take several steps that represent the first efforts to implement NSC-68, the major policy-planning paper drafted just prior to the outbreak of the Korean conflict.[28] The President was urged to request an increase in the authorized manpower levels of the armed forces from Congress, as well as substantial appropriations for an increase in the production of military goods and the power to allocate supplies of certain critical raw materials. Truman approved these proposals and five days later (July 19), sent a special message to Congress requesting everything the report had called for.[29]

The President's message of July 19 traced the course of recent events in Korea and elsewhere in the world, insisting that circumstances dictated that the United States increase its total military strength, not just to meet the needs in Korea, but to prepare the common defense of all free nations to resist further anticipated aggression. The requested increments fell into three categories: (1) more men, supplies and equipment were required to meet the

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[27]Ibid., 421.

[28]Hammond, "NSC-68," 351.

[29]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 421.

situation in Korea; (2) over and above the needs for defending Korea, the force levels of the armed services as well as the supporting materiel must be substantially increased; (3) American military support of other nations must be augmented by increased appropriations. The President also told the Congress he had instructed the Secretary of Defense to exceed budgeted levels for military personnel in the Army, Navy and Air Force. The Selective Service System had been ordered to increase the draft in order to fill the allocated spaces. Truman's message also revealed that he had directed the Secretary of Defense to activate as many National Guard units and Army, Navy and Air Force Reserve components as might be required.[30] The day after his message was sent to Congress, Truman received a note from John Foster Dulles of the State Department. Dulles told the President that talks he had with the Republican leadership on the message indicated he would receive strong bipartisan support.[31] Responding on July 21, Truman thanked Dulles and added: "I see no other way to meet the present world situation than the manner in

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[30]Item No. 193, Special Message to the Congress Reporting on the Situation in Korea, July 19, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 532.

[31]Dulles to the President, July 20, 1950, Truman Papers, OF, 471-B - Korean Emergency (June-July, 1950), Truman Library.

which we are meeting it."[32]

Truman found the Congress most cooperative in providing the manpower levels and additional appropriations which he requested in this and other messages during the next few months. Before requesting additional force levels from Congress, he had already authorized the Army to increase its manpower by 110,000 "spaces" above the total strength of 592,000 at the beginning of July.[33] On the day Truman's message went up to Congress (July 19) a bill was introduced which would remove all statutory limitations on personnel ceilings for the services for the next four years. The bill was approved on August 8, 1950.[34] In the next few months a bewildering series of measures flowed swiftly through the Congress moving the country, as Acheson put it, ". . . in a somewhat disorderly way into a more formidable military posture."[35] The rapidity of this partial mobilization was amazing. For example, within eleven months the size of the Army had almost tripled.[36] The assumptions which guided Truman and his

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[32]Truman to Dulles, July 21, 1950, ibid.

[33]Collins testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1309. See also, Hammond, "NSC-68," 351.

[34]Hammond, "NSC-68," 351.

[35]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 421.

[36]Collins testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1309.

planners in this urgent rearmament effort were taken largely from NSC-68.[37]

To the small American force first committed to battle in early July by MacArthur's self-styled "arrogant display of strength," [38] the additional troops and equipment came too late. They were committed to fighting a superior force with outdated equipment. In a letter to Eleanor Roosevelt, Truman denied that the forces were ill-equipped for combat, an accusation made in a story in the New York Herald Tribune on August 8, 1950. The President told Mrs. Roosevelt that he had checked with "no less an authority than General Bradley himself," and the General had assured him that the story was untrue. Apparently the story had been leaked to the press by someone high in the Administration, for Truman wrote: "Nevertheless, I fervently wish that some of my top men would learn the old,

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[37]For an excellent description of the relationship of NSC-68 to rearmament, see Hammond, "NSC-68," 351-55, 358-59. The myriad of changes in troop levels and supplemental budgetary increments brought on by Korea are detailed in Schilling, "Politics of National Defense," 211-13. See also, Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 485-86; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 421; Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, 163-64; "Louis Johnson's Testimony Before Armed Services Subcommittee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, July 25, 1950," printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, Appendix AA, 3250-55.

[38]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 336.

old lesson about the golden quality of silence."[39] The official Army history of the Korean War does not support Truman and Bradley's contention that these forces were properly equipped. One of the major problems noted in the account of early fighting, for example, was the lack of any ordnance capable of stopping the powerful Russian-built T-34 tank with which the North Koreans were equipped. There were no anti-tank mines immediately available, and the standard 2.36-inch bazooka rockets and 75-mm recoiless rifles were ineffective against these tanks. Task Force Smith of the 21st Infantry Division, the first sizable unit to see combat in Korea, reported that even at close range their standard high-explosive rounds for the 105-mm howitzer bounced harmlessly off the T-34's. Almost all of the equipment was of World War II vintage, much of it was obsolete and worn and not combat serviceable. "Equally bad," was the term used by the official Army historian to describe the physical condition of military vehicles and combat weaponry employed in the first months of the fighting in Korea.[40]

The ground combat forces initially committed in

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[39]Truman to Eleanor Roosevelt, August 22, 1950, Truman Papers, OF, 471-B - Korean Emergency, Truman Library.

[40]Appleman, South to the Naktong, 68-72, 113-14. See also, Millis, Arms and Men, 294-95.

Korea fought gallantly and suffered great losses.[41] Essentially, they were involved in a delaying action, trading space for time. MacArthur felt they did admirably, causing the enemy to delay and re-deploy in a conventional line of battle, rather than pressing through with their unstoppable tank columns. "This," MacArthur later wrote of his North Korean counterpart, "was his fatal error."[42] This miscalculation of American strength gave MacArthur time to place enough force in Korea to establish a secure foothold on the southeastern tip of the peninsula. By early August the Korean and American defenders were crowded into the "Pusan Perimeter," an area roughly the size of the state of Connecticut.[43] The perimeter was staunchly maintained by Lt. General Walton H. Walker, Commander of the Eighth Army, to whom MacArthur had delegated field command over all ground forces in Korea.[44] The important thing about the perimeter was that it fixed the enemy in a relatively static position on the end of a very long,

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[41]As of September 30, 1950, the U.S. Army had 103,601 personnel committed in Korea. They had sustained 24,172 casualties by September 30, with 5,145 of that total having been killed in action. See Appleman, South to the Naktong, 605-606.

[42]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 336.

[43]Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 486.

[44]Truman, Memoirs, II, 347.

vulnerable line of supply.

MacArthur had always intended, once he was able to halt the North Korean advance, to strike deep behind the enemy, cutting supply and communication lines and blocking the escape routes. This would place the main body in an untenable position, between the "hammer" and the "anvil" of military jargon. Early in July MacArthur had informed Washington that this was his intention: "Once he (NKPA) is fixed, it will be my purpose fully to exploit our air and sea control, and, by amphibious maneuver, strike him behind his mass of ground force."[45] Given MacArthur's extraordinary success in World War II with amphibious sweeps striking at his opponent's rear, it was natural for him to devise such a tactical maneuver for relieving the pressure on the Pusan Perimeter.[46]

It was MacArthur's genius as a tactician to choose the one site the enemy would consider least likely as an invasion target and the one locale that would bring the quickest military rewards if successful. The General's problem was that he alone, among the military hierarchy, believed that such an assault could succeed. For MacArthur selected the port city of Inchon (Inch'on) on

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[45]CINCFE to Department of the Army, July 7, 1950, quoted in Appleman, South to the Naktong, 118. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 347.

[46]Appleman, South to the Naktong, 488.

the western coast of Korea. The second largest port in South Korea, Inchon is located on the Yellow Sea, some twenty-five miles west of the capital city of Seoul, which is a point of convergence for the highways and rail lines of Korea.[47] However desirable a target the Inchon-Seoul area represented, the physical geography of the area created seemingly insurmountable obstacles to a massive amphibious assault. As one of MacArthur's planning staff for Inchon remarked: "We drew up a list of every conceivable and natural handicap and Inchon had them all."[48] MacArthur was firmly convinced that Inchon must be the attack site. On July 23 he wired the Pentagon for clearance of the operation, telling his superiors that the alternative would be an expensive, protracted breakthrough from the Pusan Perimeter. The General waited three weeks for a response. When it came, it was a wire informing him that Army Chief of Staff Collins and Chief of Naval Operations Sherman were flying to Tokyo to discuss the proposed operation with him. MacArthur believed Collins and Sherman were sent to dissuade him, not to discuss his plans. Behind Washington's opposition to the Inchon invasion,

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[47] American Military History, 553; MacArthur, Reminiscences, 346.

[48] Quoted in Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 44. See also, Willoughby and Chamberlain, MacArthur.

according to MacArthur, were General Bradley and President Truman; the former believing that amphibious operations were obsolete, the latter opposing any use of the Marines except as a police force.[49]

MacArthur and his staff met with Collins and Sherman on August 23, to discuss the Inchon invasion. A naval briefing team began the meeting by explaining that many hazards were present at Inchon. Most notably, one of the greatest tides in the world, that on the anticipated invasion date (September 15) would fall about thirty feet at full ebb, leaving mud flats extending from the shore as much as two miles. This meant that landing craft would have about two hours in the morning and two and a half hours in the evening to land troops, neutralize defenses, secure a beachhead and prepare for counterattack. The rest of the time the landing craft would be stuck helplessly in mud awaiting the next full tide.[50] The Marine invaders would face sixteen-foot high seawalls in an attack on a highly-built up area offering extensive cover to the defensive forces. Admiral James T. Doyle, the Amphibious Group Commander, summarized

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[49]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 346-47. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 347-48.

[50]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 348. See also, American Military History, 553; Appleman, South to the Naktong, 493.

the Navy's position by saying that while the operation was not impossible, he would recommend against it.[51] General Collins suggested that the amphibious assault take place further down the coastline at the port of Kunsan, the object being a flanking envelopment linking with General Walker's force in the Pusan Perimeter. Admiral Sherman indicated he favored Collins' proposal.[52]

MacArthur took the floor and in a very eloquent forty-five minute discourse, made believers of almost all of the skeptics present. He argued that Collins' plan would be a wasteful "short envelopment" that would serve no real purpose. The value of striking at Seoul was simply that it was the key to the extended enemy supply line. He recognized all of the Navy's objections as real but not insuperable obstacles. MacArthur said his experience with the Navy in the last war made him confident they could accomplish their part of the task. To those who doubted, he cited the example of James Wolfe at Quebec in 1759, who won a pivotal battle of the French and Indian War by attacking the Marquis de Montcalm at the one point where the French deemed an attack to be impossible. In closing, MacArthur said that he would be at Inchon and

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[51] Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, 240.

[52] Collins, War in Peacetime, 123, 125. See also, MacArthur, Reminiscences, 348-49; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 44-45.

if the defenses were too strong, he would order withdrawal: "The only loss then will be my professional reputation. But Inchon will not fail. Inchon will succeed. And it will save 100,000 lives."[53]

Sherman and Collins returned to Washington following their meeting with MacArthur to discuss Inchon with the other members of the Joint Chiefs. The plans were subsequently brought to Truman with the JCS recommendation that they be approved. The President agreed, later writing: "It was a daring strategic conception. I had the greatest confidence that it would succeed."[54] Truman's enthusiasm after the fact is quite strong, but the JCS directive he approved for transmission to MacArthur carried qualifications. It read, in part:

> We concur in making preparations for and executing a turning movement to amphibious forces on the west coast of Korea, either at Inch'on in the event the enemy defenses in the vicinity of Inch'on prove ineffective, or at a favorable beach south of Inch'on if one can be located. We further concur in

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[53]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 349-50; Collins, War in Peacetime, 125-26. See also, Appleman, South to the Naktong, 493-94; Willoughby and Chamberlain, MacArthur, 370-72; Ridgway, Korean War, 33; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 45.

[54]Truman, Memoirs, II, 358. Apparently Secretary Johnson was the only Washington official to back the Inchon plan from the outset. See his testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 4, 2618, 2661.

preparations, if desired by CINCFE, for an envelopment by amphibious forces in the vicinity of Kunsan.[55]

Since the invasion of Inchon had not been ruled out, MacArthur concentrated on it with single-minded purpose. The target date was set at September 15. On the fifth he received a message from the Joint Chiefs asking for details on pending operational plans. The General replied that his plans remained unchanged. The JCS cabled the Far East Commander again on the seventh. They expressed concern over the Inchon attack in light of a recent massive offensive against General Walker's Eighth Army around Pusan. The Joint Chiefs reminded MacArthur that he would be committing practically all of his available reserves and that the only substantial reinforcements available--recently federalized National Guard divisions--would not be ready for an additional four months. On this basis they asked MacArthur to reconsider his plans.[56] MacArthur's reply to the JCS was that he contemplated no change in his plans and that he believed that the Inchon operation presented the only genuine opportunity to take

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[55]JCS to CINCFE, August 28, 1950, quoted in Appleman, South to the Naktong, 494. See also, MacArthur, Reminiscences, 351; Collins, War in Peacetime, 127.

[56]JCS to CINCFE, September 7, 1950, printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 4, 2661-62. See also, Appleman, South to the Naktong, 494-95.

the initiative away and strike a decisive blow.[57] MacArthur recalled, while waiting anxiously for a reply, that he asked himself if, ". . . even now . . . timidity in an office thousands of miles away, even if by a President himself, could stop this golden opportunity to turn defeat into victory?"[58] A message from the Joint Chiefs soon arrived to reassure the General: "We approve your plan and President has been so informed."[59]

It is a tribute to the military brilliance of Douglas MacArthur that the Inchon landing went off on September 15 exactly as planned. The Tenth Corps, especially created for this attack, captured Inchon against unexpectedly light resistance.[60] The American force

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[57]MacArthur to JCS, September 8, 1950, quoted in Appleman, South to the Naktong, 495. MacArthur also printed his reply in his Reminiscences, 352. See also, Far East Hearings, Pt. 4, 2662; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 47.

[58]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 352.

[59]JCS to CINCFE, September 8, 1950, quoted in Appleman, South to the Naktong, 495.

[60]American Military History, 555. The North Koreans probably knew that an amphibious assault was imminent, but were uncertain of the site. Appleman, South to the Naktong (p. 487) says it was generally known among UN forces that such a landing was planned for mid-September. Dean Acheson claims that the Inchon attack was nicknamed, "Operation Common Knowledge" in Japan. He also says that Communist spies learned of the invasion plans through a security leak, but were unable to contact their North Korean counterparts. Present at the Creation, 448.

pushed inland against stiffer opposition with one arm heading south to seize Suwon and the other moving relentlessly toward Seoul, which was recaptured on the twenty-eighth. On September 16 General Walker had begun to push out of the Pusan Perimeter. Hie Eighth Army gained slowly at first, but the NKPA, cut off from supplies and reinforcements and aware of the impending envelopment, broke into disorderly retreat on September 23. Three days later, elements of the Tenth Corps and Eighth Army linked up. Allied troops continued to roll back the North Korean Army with little difficulty once the rout began. At the end of September organized resistance had ceased south of the thirty-eighth parallel.[61]

The Joint Chiefs of Staff, who had doubted the wisdom of Inchon from the very beginning, willingly acknowledged MacArthur's triumph: ". . . you have exploited to the utmost all capabilities and opportunities. Your transition from defensive to offensive operations was magnificently planned, timed and executed."[62] Similar

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[61] American Military History, 555. Out of a force of some 100,000, approximately 30,000 escaped into North Korea, disorganized and without their support equipment. See Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 584; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 81; Rovere and Schlesinger, The General and the President, 133-34. For a full account of the fighting for Inchon and up from the Pusan perimeter, see Appleman, South to the Naktong, 488-606.

[62] Quoted in MacArthur, Reminiscences, 356. See also, Collins, War in Peacetime, 141.

warm messages of congratulations on the Inchon victory were received by MacArthur from the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of the Army, General Eisenhower, Winston Churchill, Admiral Halsey and numerous other international figures.[63] Truman sent a message of congratulations praising MacArthur's historic triumph:

> I know that I speak for the entire American people when I send you my warmest congratulations on the victory which has been achieved under your leadership in Korea. Few operations in military history can match either the delaying action where you traded space for time in which to build up your forces, or the brilliant maneuver which had now resulted in the liberation of Seoul. I am particularly impressed by the splendid cooperation of our Army, Navy and Air Force. . . . My thanks and the thanks of the people of all the free nations go out to your gallant forces. . . .[64]

In the midst of the Inchon-Seoul campaign the Defense Department acquired a new Secretary, for Truman found it expedient to replace Louis Johnson, As Secretary of Defense, Johnson had come under critical fire for the lack of preparedness of the American military that had been made evident by the early fighting in Korea. Although this condition was caused by the budget cuts imposed by Truman and the Congress on the military establishment, the Secretary was the natural target of

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[63]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 356-57.

[64]Truman to MacArthur, September 29, 1950, Truman Papers, OF, 471-B - Korean Emergency (August-November, 1950), Truman Library.

criticism. Additionally, it was widely-known that Johnson was unable to get along with Dean Acheson and the State Department.[65] Johnson testified in 1951 that he had no idea why he had been made to resign, but it would seem that his feud with Acheson and an unfavorable press made him an expendable liability to Truman.[66] Johnson's testimony makes it clear that his resignation was a result of pressure from the White House. He said he did not know why he was "ousted" and regretted having to resign three days before the Inchon landing which he felt would end much of the criticism, since he had favored the plan from the outset.[67] He said when the White House failed to deny an Associated Press story that he was to be removed and Acheson was to remain in the Cabinet, he called Truman and later resigned as a result of that telephone conversation.[68]

In his letter of resignation, dated September 12, Johnson recalled telling Truman when accepting the post

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[65]Hoare, "Truman," 196-97. See also, Bernardo and Bacon, American Military Policy, 477; O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 69; Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 380-81; Johnson testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 4, 2625.

[66]Far East Hearings, Pt. 4, 2618.

[67]Ibid.

[68]Ibid., 2624. In his memoirs, Truman does not discuss Johnson's dismissal at all.

that in performing his tasks as Secretary he would probably make more enemies than friends and now admitted, "somewhat reufully," that he had been right. So Johnson tendered his resignation for the sake of the war effort. He closed by recommending that Truman appoint as his successor a man whose stature would promote unity, General George C. Marshall.[69] Truman accepted Johnson's resignation in a letter dated the same day. He spoke of the "terribly regrettable circumstances" that had arisen, forcing him to concur in Johnson's decision to resign, effective September 19. The President also accepted the recommendation that Marshall be appointed as the new Secretary of Defense.[70] Johnson departed without rancor and full of praise for Truman and Marshall.[71] For seventy-year old General Marshall to be appointed, Truman would have to change the law, since the National Security Act of 1947 in Section 202(a) prohibited service by a military officer as Secretary of Defense.

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[69]Johnson to Truman, September 12, 1950, Truman Papers, OF, 1285, Truman Library.

[70]Truman to Johnson, September 12, 1950, ibid. This letter was published as Item No. 245, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 632.

[71]See, for example, Johnson's remarks before the American Bar Association on his last full day in office, September 18, 1950, Office of Public Information, Department of Defense, Press Release No. 177-50S, copy in Truman Papers, OF, 1285, Truman Library.

Truman was prepared to act on General Marshall's appointment. The day after Johnson's letter of resignation, he sent draft legislation that would allow Marshall to serve as Secretary of Defense to the chairmen of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees. In a covering letter, Truman explained that he believed strongly in the "general principle" that civilians should direct the Department of Defense. "However," Truman wrote, "in view of the present critical circumstances and of General Marshall's unusual qualifications, I believe that the national interest will be served best by making an exception in this case."[72] The Congress was willing. On September 18, only five days after submitting his draft legislation, Truman was able to sign the bill into law. Senate confirmation quickly followed, and Marshall took the oath of office on September 20, 1950.[73]

The defeat of the aggressors in South Korea in the last week of September restored the status quo ante bellum. It must have seemed to many that MacArthur's bold strike at Inchon had dramatically achieved the objective for which the United States had fought. At the outset Acheson

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[72]Truman to Millard E. Tydings, September 13, 1950, Truman Papers, OF, 1285, Truman Library.

[73]"A Bill . . . to Appoint General of the Army George C. Marshall to the Office of Secretary of Defense" (64 Stat. 853). See Item No. 246, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 633-34.

had said that American intervention was ". . . solely for the purpose of restoring the Republic of Korea to its status prior to the invasion from the north."[74] But the expulsion of the North Korean attackers led to a decision to change objectives from maintaining the independence of South Korea to the conquest and political unification of all Korea. Through hindsight it can be seen that the decision to cross the thirty-eighth parallel was a tragic miscalculation.[75]

The first suggestion that the United Nations forces should carry the fight into North Korea came from MacArthur. On July 13 he told Generals Collins and Vandenberg that the destruction of the enemy forces might necessitate the occupation of all North Korea.[76] On July 31, 1950, the National Security Council completed a study of crossing the parallel, which was submitted to the

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[74]Quoted in American Military History, 556.

[75]D. F. Fleming, who had described the crossing of the 38th parallel as a "monumental error" and a "plain invitation to disaster," has estimated that a total of five million casualties (on both sides, military and civilian), resulted from the fighting in Korea, with two million of these dead. Of all casualties, according to Fleming, four-fifths were sustained after the liberation of South Korea. The Cold War, II, 655-56. See also, Fleming, "America's Responsibility," 15-16; Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 10.

[76]Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 51.

State and Defense Departments for comment. The plan recommended that MacArthur be allowed to cross the boundary line in order to defeat the North Korean People's Army and occupy the country. The proposal carried three contingent assumptions: (1) that America would provide the men and materiel sufficient to the task without depleting forces in other strategic areas around the world; (2) that no threat of Soviet or Chinese intervention in Korea or elsewhere then existed; (3) that Truman, Congress and the United States accepted the unification and independence of all of Korea as a new war objective.[77]

The National Security Council proposals, incorporating some modifications suggested by the JCS, were approved by the President on September 11, 1950. The President also allowed the Joint Chiefs to send MacArthur a tentative advisory in respect to operations above the thirty-eighth parallel.[78] The message to MacArthur, dated September 15, informed him that final decisions on future operations could not yet be made until several factors were added to the equation regarding Soviet and Chinese intentions, the risk of general war involved and the

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[77]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 451; Truman, Memoirs, II, 359. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 584; Collins, War in Peacetime, 144-46.

[78]Truman, Memoirs, II, 359; Collins, War in Peacetime, 146.

viewpoint of "friendly members" of the United Nations. However, MacArthur was told that it was Washington's belief that a legal basis for crossing the parallel into North Korea already existed on the basis of the UN resolution of June 27. The directive instructed MacArthur to make plans for the invasion and occupation of North Korea, but to execute the order only with the express consent of President Truman. The General was also cautioned not to undertake ground action into North Korea if Soviet or Chinese Communist units were found to occupy the area, although he could continue to attack with his air and naval units. One last warning was a portent of the future: MacArthur was informed that if a major Chinese Communist force penetrated below the thirty-eighth parallel, he was to resist this incursion as long as it was militarily feasible to do so, but that the United States would not--as a matter of policy--allow itself to be drawn into a general war with China.[79]

Six days after instructing MacArthur to prepare for an advance into North Korea, a reporter asked Truman if he had decided what American troops would do when they reached

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[79] JCS to MacArthur, September 15, 1950, printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 718. This message also appears in Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 584-85. See also, Warren, President as World Leader, 338; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 95; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 51-52.

the thirty-eighth parallel: "No, I have not. That is a matter for the United Nations to decide."[80] Asked in a press conference on September 28, seven days later, if MacArthur had been granted specific authority to cross the boundary, the President replied that he could not answer the question publicly yet. The questioner persisted, asking Truman if he considered that MacArthur had implied authority to cross the thirty-eighth parallel. Truman replied: "General MacArthur is under direct orders of the President and the Chief of Staff, and he will follow those orders."[81] Truman had inadvertently tripped on the thread of fiction which held that the United Nations, not the United States, was determining the course of action in Korea. A reporter reminded him that a week earlier he had said that crossing the thirty-eighth parallel was a decision to be made by the United Nations, but he was now saying that the United Nations Commander would take orders directly from him on whether or not to cross the parallel. Truman tried to salvage the sinking myth by saying that while it was he who would give orders to MacArthur, the United Nations would have to first decide the matter and

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[80] Item No. 253, Press Conference, September 21, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 644.

[81] Item No. 258, Press Conference, September 28, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 658.

then request that he command MacArthur to act.[82]

On the day prior to this press conference of September 28, Truman had approved a directive which the Joint Chiefs transmitted to MacArthur. Based on the NSC policy statement the President had endorsed on the eleventh, it began: "Your military objective is the destruction of the North Korean armed forces. In attaining this objective, you are authorized to conduct military operations north of the thirty-eighth parallel in Korea."[83] The directive also specifically commanded that the General was not to allow his ground, sea, or air elements to cross the borders of North Korea into Mancuria or the USSR. MacArthur was further instructed to use only Korean ground forces in those provinces bordering China and the Soviet Union. Decisions as to the "character of occupation of North Korea" would be made later as circumstances warranted.[84]

Why Truman and his advisers decided to cross the

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[82] Ibid., 659. See also, Stone, Hidden History of Korean War, 108-109; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 100-101.

[83] Quoted in MacArthur, Reminiscences, 358.

[84] Ibid. For a paraphrased text of the directive, see Acheson, Present at the Creation, 452-53; Collins, War in Peacetime, 147-48. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 360-62; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 585-87; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 53; Ridgway, Korean War, 44-45; Appleman, South to the Naktong, 607; Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, 273.

thirty-eighth parallel, having already achieved their limited objective of containment, seems to have been based on considerations largely divorced from the original purpose. The explanation favored by Acheson was that it was a tactical decision. Not to pursue the retreating North Korean force and destroy it would have violated a fundamental principle of warfare. The North Korean Army, if not pursued and conquered, would be able to re-group in its sanctuary and launch another offensive. At the same time, barring an unknown factor such as Chinese intervention, the political unification of Korea would constitute a desirable by-product of this purely military operation.[85] MacArthur later testified that his original mission was to "clear all of Korea" and that if he had not crossed the 38th parallel he would have been in defiance of the orders which he had received.[86]

That an imperative military need to cross into North Korea motivated Truman's decision is unlikely, at best. The very fact that the Secretary of State took the initiative in urging this step would argue against such an assumption. The unexpectedly swift conquest of the invading army after months of clinging tenaciously to a

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[85]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 453; Acheson testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1943-44, 2258. See also, Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 89-90.

[86]Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 245-46.

toe-hold on the peninsula had created a new atmosphere of confidence. Additionally, the opportunity to accomplish the long-frustrated promise of a unified, independent Korea must have been an irresistible temptation, seemingly easy to achieve. The threatened Chinese intervention was not taken too seriously. One other factor may have been weighed in the balance by the President: His Administration's Far Eastern policies had been severely criticized since the fighting began and the mid-term congressional elections were only weeks away. There is no justification for implying that Truman would allow the invasion of North Korea in response to domestic political pressures, but the fact is that the pressure existed. The subconscious mind is a trackless labyrinth and it would be presumptuous to attempt to measure its influence on conscious decisions. On the other hand, it would be naive to assume that Truman was superior to personal and political considerations that influence the best of men.[87]

Having received authority to invade North Korea in the September 27 directive from Washington, MacArthur submitted his plans for this attack to the JCS. He

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[87]Truman did not discuss this decision at any great length. For estimates by others of his thinking, see Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 595-97; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 89-91, 95-96, 100-103; Stone, Hidden History of Korean War, 108-110.

proposed to send the Eighth Army up the western coastal corridor through Kaesong and Sariwon to Pyongyang, the capital of North Korea. By an amphibious operation, the Tenth Corps was to attack Wonsan, a port city on the eastern coast, roughly parallel to Pyongyang. Following a juncture along the Wonsan-Pyongyang road by his separate commands, MacArthur proposed to advance northward toward the Yalu River. Since his directive had instructed him not to use non-Korean forces close to the Russian and Chinese borders, the General's plan called for the use of South Korean forces only, north of a line (Chungjo-Yongwon-Hungnam) fifty miles beyond the Pyongyang-Wonsan line and approximately sixty miles below the Yalu at its mouth. MacArthur ended by saying he had no indication of entry into Korea by major Russian or Chinese communist armies.[88]

Both Secretary of Defense Marshall and Secretary of State Acheson recommended MacArthur's operational plans to Truman, who gave his consent.[89] MacArthur had

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[88]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 358; Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 719; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 453. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 361; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 53-54.

[89]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 453. General Collins admits that he and the other Joint Chiefs, "somewhat overawed by the success of Inchon," recommended approval of MacArthur's plan without having received any details. See his War in Peacetime, 158.

resented the insistence that he submit his plans to the Pentagon for final approval prior to crossing the thirty-eighth parallel.[90] Apparently to placate him, Marshall sent a curious "eyes only" personal message to MacArthur on September 29, the same day the Joint Chiefs transmitted to him the President's approval of his battle plans. In part, Marshall's message reads: "We want you to feel unhampered tactically and strategically to proceed north of the 38th parallel."[91] The Secretary also added that the President concurred in this view.[92] The following day, September 30, MacArthur responded: "Unless and until the enemy capitulates, I regard all of Korea open for our military operations."[93] It is difficult to comprehend the necessity for the secret message to MacArthur. It was later used by him to justify using American troops in the provinces bordering Manchuria; an action which precipitated intervention by Chinese forces. His response would appear to indicate that the General did not feel bound by the restrictions of the September 27 directive or the restrictions on the use of non-Korean

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[90]Appleman, South to the Naktong, 607-608.

[91]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 453.

[92]Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, 273. See also, Appleman, South to the Naktong, 608.

[93]Appleman, South to the Naktong, 608.

troops he wrote into his own operational plans of the twenty-ninth. Acheson, who was unaware of this message at the time, feels it was sent simply to soothe MacArthur's ruffled feelings at having to seek approval from Washington for his plans.[94]

The General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a resolution on October 7, 1950, which had the effect of sanctioning the invasion of North Korea by the United Nations Command. The resolution recommended that "All appropriate steps be taken to ensure conditions of stability throughout Korea . . . including the holding of elections . . . for the establishment of a unified, independent and democratic government in the sovereign State of Korea."[95] The thinking behind this act seemed to be more than just an effort to place the United Nations behind a decision already made by the American Commander in Chief. The United Nations was also changing objectives

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[94]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 453-54.

[95]Doc. No. 9, Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly, October 7, 1950, United States Policy in the Korean Conflict, 17-18. Text of the resolution also appears in Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 2436-37; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 591. The resolution, which passed forty-seven to five, witheight abstentions, had been introduced by Kenneth Younger, the British delegate, with the "full support" of President Truman. Guttman (ed.), Korea and the Theory of Limited War, 6-8. The Joint Chiefs believed that the language of the resolution gave permission for military operations north of the thirty-eighth parallel. JCS to CINCFE, October 6, 1950, printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 720.

in the light of MacArthur's success, from simple preservation of the independence of South Korea, to the unification of all Korea as called for in the resolution of November 14, 1947.[96]

The Republic of Korea, whose very existence was threatened in mid-September, was eager to take over the governing of all Korea early in October. Truman had received a message from President Rhee of South Korea following the liberation of Seoul that expressed deep gratitude: "The Korean people will always cherish the memory of your bold leadership in defense of liberty."[97] On October 11, ten days after this message, the President met with representatives of the Korean government, who thanked him for liberating their country. They also expressed the hope that now all of Korea could be united under the rule of President Rhee. Truman thanked his callers, but avoided committing himself on the question of unification under Rhee, saying only that the United States would have to be guided by the forthcoming survey report

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[96]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 454.

[97]Rhee to the President, quoted in cable, Truman to Acheson, October 1, 1950, Truman Papers, OF, 471-B - Korean Emergency, Truman Library.

of the United Nations Commission.[98] The following day the UN Interim Committee resolved that South Korean civil authority extended only to the thirty-eighth parallel and all civil control north of the border was delegated to General MacArthur.[99] The United States endorsed the Interim Committee resolution on October 13. The resolution was declared "unacceptable" by the South Korean Government on the following day. A week later President Rhee announced that it was his intention to rule over all of Korea.[100] The intervention of the Chinese forces would spoil these plans.

At nine o'clock on the morning of October 9, 1950 (Korean time), the American Eighth Army began its initial advance across the thirty-eighth parallel. It had been preceded by several divisions of the ROK Army a few days earlier. The Korean units made excellent progress, particularly along the eastern seaboard. They captured Wonsan on October 10, two weeks before landings could be

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[98]Those present at the meeting were the Korean Ambassador, John M. Chang; the Vice Chairman of the Korean National Assembly, T. S. Chang; the Korean Foreign Minister, Ben C. Limb; President Truman and Acting Chief of Protocol, R. D. Muir. See Muir, Memorandum of Conversation, October 11, 1950, Truman Papers, OF, 471 (1949-50), Truman Library.

[99]United States Foreign Policy in the Korean Conflict, Appendix III, 50.

[100]Ibid.

made there by units of the U.S. Tenth Corps.[101] In the west, however, Eighth Army met very strong resistance in its drive toward the North Korean capital city of Pyongyang. By October 14 Eighth Army had moved approximately one-third of the distance along the axis of advance toward its immediate objective, penetrating the major prepared defensive positions which the enemy had established between the thirty-eighth parallel and Pyongyang. The North Korean forces were now in confusion and an integral front line of resistance had ceased to exist.[102] However, a few Chinese Communist soldiers had been captured by this time; an ominous portent of the full-scale intervention which China had been threatening since American troops first massed along the parallel.[103] At this point, on October 15, a unique meeting was held between the Commander in Chief of the United Nations Command and his Commander in Chief.

The White House released a presidential statement

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[101] Appleman, South to the Naktong, 612.

[102] Ibid., 623-30, passim; Esposito (ed.), West Point Atlas, II, Sect. 3, Map Plate No. 7.

[103] Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 572. Early in October, the Joint Chiefs warned MacArthur that if "major Chinese units" intervened in Korea, he was to resist only so long as he had a reasonable chance to win. He was also warned not to attack Chinese territory without prior approval. JCS to CINCFE, October 9, 1950, printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 720.

to the press on October 10, 1950, in which Truman announced: "General MacArthur and I are making a quick trip over the coming week end to meet in the Pacific."[104] The President's message explained that he was meeting with MacArthur to discuss the last phase of the United Nation operations in Korea and other matters relating to the Far East Command.[105] Truman explained in his memoirs that he had several reasons for wanting to talk with MacArthur: "The first and the simplest reason . . . was that we had never had any personal contacts at all, and I thought that he ought to know his Commander in Chief and that I ought to know the senior field commander in the Far East."[106] Truman said that he also made the trip because MacArthur was out of touch with America, having been away for fourteen uninterrupted years. This caused MacArthur to consider things from a limited perspective which gave priority to Far Eastern affairs. Truman hoped to help the General adjust his thinking to the world-wide picture. The President was also concerned about intelligence reports

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[104]Doc. No. 10, Statement by the President, October 10, 1950, United States Policy in the Korean Conflict, 19. Text of Truman's statement can also be found in the New York Times, October 10, 1950; Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3483-84; Item No. 264, Statement by the President on His Forthcoming Meeting With General MacArthur, October 10, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 665-66.

[105]New York Times, October 10, 1950.

[106]Truman, Memoirs, II, 362-63.

and repeated threats from Peking that Chinese forces would intervene in Korea, and he wanted MacArthur's views on the possibility of such an attack. As for the timing of his trip to the mid-Pacific (they met on Wake Island), Truman explained that he had to speak on October 17 in San Francisco and a week later address the UN General Assembly in New York and he wanted to bring back a first-hand report from the United Nations Commander.[107]

Secretary of State Acheson was invited by the President to join him in this conference with MacArthur. Acheson asked to be excused since he found the whole idea repugnant. He told Truman that the General had many of the attributes of a foreign ruler and was just as difficult to control. Acheson thought it unwise for the President to go to MacArthur. To the Secretary this was tantamount to acknowledging the General's image as a sovereign. "I wanted no part of it," Acheson later wrote, "and saw no good coming from it. . . . talk should precede, not follow, the issuance of orders."[108] In terms of protocol, the normal procedure would be for the commander in chief to summon a field commander to Washington. However, as General Bradley later testified, Truman

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[107]Ibid., 363. See also, Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 110-11.

[108]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 456.

was willing to go to MacArthur rather than pull him away from his command at this critical juncture for any length of time.[109]

The timing of Truman's visit was probably influenced by his concern over Chinese intentions and an incident on October 9 in which two F-80 fighter aircraft attacked a Soviet air station. The base was located sixty-two miles north of the Korean border and eighteen miles to the southwest of the Russian port of Vladivostok. When the Soviet Union protested this "gross violation" of its territory, an Air Force spokesman in Tokyo denied any knowledge of the charges and the State Department said it was a matter to be taken up with the United Nations, since the planes operated under its auspices. But the day following the attack, the President announced he was going to Wake Island to meet with MacArthur.[110]

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[109]Bradley testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1115; Marshall testimony, ibid., Pt. 1, 439. MacArthur recalls receiving a cable from Secretary Marshall on October 12, indicating that the President wanted a conference with him on the 15th and had suggested Honolulu as the meeting place. However, if MacArthur felt that this would keep him away from his command too long, Truman would be willing to go to Wake Island. MacArthur responded that he would be "delighted to meet the President" . . . on Wake Island. Reminiscences, 360. In his San Francisco speech on the 17th, Truman said he had gone to Wake Island because he did not wish to take MacArthur away from his command for any length of time. Item No. 269, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 673.

[110]Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 111-12; Stone, Hidden History of the Korean War, 139-40.

While the incident was not widely noted at the time, it may have had a dramatic effect on the President. He had been from the outset of the conflict vitally concerned with keeping Korea a limited conflict, to avoid giving China or the Soviet Union a reason to intercede and widen the war. Nations had gone to war in the past for less provocation than that generated by the errant F-80's. Four days after the Wake Island meeting, Ambassador Warren Austin presented a report to the Security Council from MacArthur. The report attributed the attack to navigational miscalculation by the pilots and a failure properly to identify the target prior to their attack. Austin stated that disciplinary action was being instituted against the two pilots and that the commander of their air group had been relieved.[111] Author John Spanier has suggested that the sequence of events following the incident indicates Truman's concern and may have been a major factor in his decision to meet with MacArthur. If this is so, Spanier concludes, ". . . it underlined the urgency of the President's desire to achieve a better working relationship with MacArthur during this final

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[111]Stone, Hidden History of the Korean War, 140. On October 19, the United States acknowledged responsibility for the attack and offered to make restitution. Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 111.

stage of the campaign."[112]

Truman came to Wake Island bearing gifts: a five-pound box of candied plums for Mrs. MacArthur and a fourth Oak Leaf Cluster to add to the General's Distinguished Service Medal.[113] For his part, MacArthur said he had been warned about Truman's "quick and violent temper and prejudices," but that he found the President to be courteous and humorous: "He has an engaging personality, a quick and witty tongue, and I liked him from the start."[114] Truman recalls that MacArthur--they were meeting for the first and last time--was friendly and that he ". . . found him a most stimulating and interesting person."[115] The two men met privately for approximately forty-five minutes and then met with other members of their staffs for a general conference lasting about ninety minutes.

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[112]Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 112. I. F. Stone, in his Hidden History of the Korean War (p. 150), agreed with Spanier that the air attack on Soviet territory precipitated Truman's insistance on an immediate meeting with MacArthur. General Willoughby was certain that Truman came to Wake Island for political purposes only, with an eye to the November elections. He was able, thereby, to "drape the mantle of MacArthur about his shoulders," by misleading the people. Willoughby and Chamberlain, MacArthur, 382, 390-91. However, MacArthur did not agree with this judgment. He wrote that it was an injustice to say that Truman was motivated by political considerations. Reminiscences, 363-64.

[113]Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 104.

[114]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 361.

[115]Truman, Memoirs, II, 365.

What transpired in the private meeting is open to conjecture. MacArthur declined to testify as to the substance of their conversation during the hearings on his dismissal in 1951, which was proper, since it represented a privileged communication.[116] General Whitney, MacArthur's aide and biographer, felt constrained to reveal part of what the General told him about the conversation. Whitney claims a passing reference was made to Formosa and that the bulk of the conversation dealt with ". . . the fiscal and economic problems of the Philippines."[117] In his memoirs, Truman recalled that only a brief reference was made to Formosa, but made no mention whatever of the Philippines. Instead, he wrote that MacArthur assured him victory in Korea was a certainty and Chinese Communist intervention was quite unlikely. The General also told the President that he should be able to release at least a division from Korea for service in

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[116]MacArthur testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 41.

[117]Whitney, MacArthur, 387. This is partially borne out by the record of the general meeting at Wake Island, wherein Truman is recorded as saying that he had already talked at length with MacArthur about the Philippines. He also said there was no need to discuss Formosa, since that subject had been fully "discussed with MacArthur and that they were in full accord." U.S., Congress, Senate, Committees on Armed Services and Foreign Relations, Substance of Statements Made at Wake Island Conferences on October 15, 1950, compiled by Omar N. Bradley, 82 Cong., 1 Sess. (Washington, 1951), 7-8. Hereinafter cited as Substance of Statements Made at Wake Island.

Europe by January of 1951.[118]

The general conference at Wake Island started immediately after the Private session between Truman and MacArthur.[119] The meeting began with the General telling the President that formal resistance in all of Korea should end by Thanksgiving. If this proved to be the case, he planned to withdraw the Eighth Army to Japan by Christmas. MacArthur expressed the hope that the United Nations would be able to conduct elections in North Korea soon after the first of the year, following which he proposed to pull out all occupation forces.[120] Later in

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[118]Truman, Memoirs, II, 364-65; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 105.

[119]The principal figures in attendance at this meeting, in addition to Truman and MacArthur, were General Bradley, Ambassador Muccio, Ambassador-at-Large Phillip Jessup, Assistant Secretary Dean Rusk, Army Secretary Pace, W. Averell Harriman and Admiral Arthur Radford, Commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet. Substance of Statements Made at Wake Island, 1. This document was the cause of much controversy later. It was based on notes of the meeting taken by Bradley, Jessup, Harriman, Rusk, and two staff officers, also present. In addition, they draw from a reasonably full stenographic record taken unofficially by Jessup's secretary, Vernice Anderson, who was waiting in an adjoining room to type out a communiqué on the meeting. MacArthur and his aide, General Whitney, have claimed that Truman's Press Secretary, Charles Ross, had cautioned them that no notes were to be taken during the conference. See MacArthur, Reminiscences, 361; Whitney, MacArthur, 388, 381-92. For other commentary on these notes, see Truman, Memoirs, II, 365; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 456; Appleman, South to the Naktong, footnote, 760; Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 27-29, 683-84; Pt. 2, 926-28, 979-80.

[120]Substance of Statements Made at Wake Island, 1, 6; Truman, Memoirs, II, 365-66; Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, 277.

the meeting, Bradley asked MacArthur if he would be able to spare a division for redeployment to Europe by January. MacArthur said he could have the Second Division by then.[121] When asked by Army Secretary Pace if there was any more that needed to be done in terms of cooperation with the Far East Command, MacArthur replied: "No commander in the history of war has ever had more complete and adequate support from all agencies in Washington than I have."[122]

Toward the close of this meeting, Truman asked MacArthur to estimate the chances of Soviet or Chinese intervention in Korea. "Very little" the General replied. "Had they intervened in the first or second months it would have been decisive. We are no longer fearful of their intervention."[123] MacArthur went on to explain that the Soviet Union had no appreciable ground forces nearby and that the Chinese, who had about 125,000 troops along the Yalu River, could only commit about 60,000 across the river. Because they lacked a proper air force for support,

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[121] Substance of Statements Made at Wake Island, 6.

[122] Ibid., 3. During the 1951 hearings on his dismissal, MacArthur reaffirmed this statement, adding that it was correct up to that time. See his testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 213.

[123] Substance of Statements Made at Wake Island, 5.

MacArthur believed that ". . . if the Chinese tried to get down to Pyongyang there would be the greatest slaughter."[124] As to the possible combination of Russian air support of Chinese ground operations, the General believed that liaison would be too difficult to be effective.[125] Shortly after this meeting ended, MacArthur flew back to Japan and Truman departed for San Francisco.

In a statement issued following the Wake Island conference, Truman described the meeting as "highly satisfactory," and indicated that a "very complete unanimity of view" had prevailed. The President said that he had primarily discussed with MacArthur the military aspects of the Korean situation and the further steps which would be required to bring peace and security to the area.[126]

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[124]Ibid. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 366; MacArthur, Reminiscences, 362; Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, 277.

[125]Substance of Statements Made at Wake Island, 5; Truman, Memoirs, II, 366. MacArthur has since stated that the views he expressed on the possibility of intervention had been qualified beforehand as pure speculation, based on an entirely military point of view towards a question that was basically political. Reminiscences, 362. See also, Appleman, South to the Naktong, 760. For other views of the Wake Island discussion on the subject of Chinese intervention, see Whitney, MacArthur, 392-93; Fleming, The Cold War, II, 617-18; Rovere and Schlesinger, The General and the President, 132-33; Willoughby and Chamberlain, MacArthur, 382-83; Collins, War in Peacetime, 153-54.

[126]Item No. 268, Statement by the President on His Meeting with General MacArthur at Wake Island, October 15, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950,

Speaking at the War Memorial Opera House in San Francisco two days later, Truman said that there was no need for speculation about why he went to Wake Island: "I went because I wanted to see and talk to General MacArthur. . . . There is no substitute for personal conversation with the commander in the field who knows the problems there from first-hand experience."[127]

Five days after the Wake Island Conference, the Eighth Army, employing a ground attack and parachute drop, enveloped and captured the North Korean capital city of Pyongyang. Resistance to the United Nation's advance became increasingly sporadic, often confined to guerrilla-type actions of limited effect. MacArthur later wrote that the fall of Pyongyang, ". . . symbolized the complete defeat of North Korea."[128] Truman cabled MacArthur his congratulations for the "remarkable" progress made since their meeting at Wake Island.[129] The General's confidence that the fighting was over shows clearly in a message to

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672. See also, Doc. No. 11, United States Policy in the Korean Conflict, 19-20; Collins testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1307; Ibid., Pt. 5, Appendix VIII (B), 3484-85; New York Times, October 16, 1950.

[127]Item No. 269, Address in San Francisco at the War Memorial Opera House, October 17, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 673.

[128]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 364.

[129]Quoted in ibid.

the Joint Chiefs on October 21. He informed his superiors that he hoped to start the movement of the Eighth Army back to Japan before Thanksgiving and intended to complete the transfer before Christmas.[130]

The ROK forces driving northward from Pyongyang were moving too slowly to satisfy General MacArthur. On October 24, without prior consultation with Washington, he advised his commanders that he was lifting all restrictions on the use of non-Korean forces close to the Chinese border. The field commanders were instructed by MacArthur to ignore the restraining line he had previously imposed upon them and to use any and all forces at their command necessary to complete the capture of North Korea.[131] This order countermanded the JCS directive of September 27, which had restricted operations in the northern provinces to Korean troops exclusively. The JCS informed MacArthur on the same day that they were sure he had good reasons for taking this action, but wished to be informed as to what these reasons were.[132] Replying on October 25, MacArthur said that his orders were a matter of "military

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[130]MacArthur to JCS, October 21, 1950, quoted in Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 720.

[131]Ibid., Pt. 2, 1216-17, 1240. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 600; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 64.

[132]Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1240.

necessity" because the strength and leadership of the ROK forces were insufficient for the accomplishment of his objective. It was the General's opinion that his new instructions were not in violation of the September 27 directive. He also indicated that Secretary Marshall's message to him of September 30 provided him with the "necessary latitude" to modify his instructions to suit the combat situation. MacArthur also said that the whole subject had already been covered in his meeting with Truman on Wake Island.[133] While the Joint Chiefs apparently were still convinced that MacArthur had violated his instructions, they did not move to countermand his orders. Nor is there any indication that the President was consulted. The matter was simply dropped, the Defense Department being unwilling to overrule a field commander arguing military necessity, particularly one of MacArthur's prestige.[134]

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[133]MacArthur to JCS, October 25, 1950, quoted in ibid., Pt. 1, 721; Pt. 2, 1241. The paraphrase cited here was censored prior to publication of the testimony. The placement of the deletion marks would seem to indicate that MacArthur had amplified upon his reasons for the "military necessity" of using American forces in the drive to the Manchurian border. However, this is only speculation, since the deletions are still classified. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 600; Appleman, South to the Naktong, 670; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 461-62; Truman, Memoirs, II, 372.

[134]Collins, War in Peacetime, 180-81. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 600-601; Appleman, South to the Naktong, 670-71.

During the Blair House meetings in which the decision was made to involve the United States in Korea, consideration was given to the possibility of Communist China entering the war. There was general agreement then that while a risk did exist, such intervention was not likely to occur.[135] It will be recalled that the directives to MacArthur regarding his operations above the thirty-eighth parallel, which Truman had approved in September, carried a restrictive proviso in the event of major intervention by Soviet or Chinese Communist Forces.[136] Acheson testified later that it was the belief of the President's advisers that crossing of the thirty-eighth parallel probably would not cause China to intervene.[137] This belief must have been based on the assumption that the Chinese were only bluffing, for they had indicated otherwise on several occasions.

General Nieh Yen-jung, acting Chief of the Communist General Staff, had discussed the American crossing of the thirty-eighth parallel with the Indian Ambassador at Peking, Sardar K. M. Panikkar, on September 25. He informed the Ambassador that China would not

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[135]Bradley testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 938-39; Johnson testimony, ibid., Pt. 4, 2621-22.

[136]Ibid., Pt. 1, 718; MacArthur, Reminiscences, 358; Ridgway, Korean War, 45.

[137]Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 2100-101.

permit the United States to advance to the Yalu River.[138] In public speeches on September 31 and October 1, China's Foreign Minister, Chou En-lai, said that his country would resist foreign aggression against its North Korean neighbors.[139] On October 3 Chou summoned Panikkar to inform him that if American troops advanced across the parallel China would enter the war. It was Panikkar's understanding that if only South Korean forces entered North Korea, this would not precipitate Chinese intervention.[140]

The President and his advisers believed that Chou En-lai's warnings were designed to "blackmail" the United Nations. However, Truman concluded that the possibility of Chinese intervention was too great to be ignored. He ordered the Joint Chiefs to send a directive to MacArthur in the event that Chinese Communist Forces were committed

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[138]Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 85.

[139]Ibid., 86.

[140]Acheson testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1833. See also, Acheson, Present at the Creation, 452; Truman, Memoirs, II, 361-62; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 593; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 54-55; Rovere and Schlesinger, The General and the President, 147. The authors of the latter work disagree with the generally-accepted view that the Chinese Communists intervened because the U.S. forces crossed the thirty-eighth parallel. (See pp. 147-151) They are supported in part by Willoughby and Chamberlain, who believe that North Korea had assurances of Chinese military support prior to the outset of the war. See MacArthur, 380.

in North Korea. The instructions to the Far East Commander, dated October 9, read, in part:

> In light of the possible intervention of Chinese Communist forces in North Korea the following amplification of our directive . . . is forwarded for your guidance:
> Hereafter in the event of the open or covert employment anywhere inKorea of major Chinese Communist units, without prior announcement, you should continue the action as long as, in your judgment, action by forces now under your control offers a reasonable chance of success. In any case you will obtain authorization from Washington prior to taking any military action against objectives in Chinese territory.[141]

Truman considered the October 9 directive to be a restrictive, cautionary gesture. In fact it allowed MacArthur greater latitude. The September 27 directive had prohibited advancement into North Korea if Chinese actions constituted a major threat of intervention. The corollary of October 9 allowed MacArthur to continue his advance northward even if the Chinese did attack, so long as the General felt he could win. This willingness to risk a confrontation with a fresh new opponent was a product of the optimism generated by the triumph at Inchon and a

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[141] JCS to CINCFE, October 9, 1950, quoted in Truman, Memoirs, II, 362. Message also appears in Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 720. See also, Collins, War in Peacetime, 174-75; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 596; Richard E. Neustadt, Presidential Power: The Politics of Leadership (New York: New American Library, 1964), 132-33. Hereinafter cited as Neustadt, Presidential Power.

failure of military and political intelligence.[142] Inchon had made the long-sought goal of Korean unification seem within easy grasp. MacArthur's military intelligence had informed him that Chinese armies were being moved to the banks of the Yalu. But it was assumed that with the North Korean Army in disarray and the presumed ability of American air power to prevent any sizable movement southward by the Chinese, the logic of the military situation argued against an invasion.[143] The political intelligence that China would go to war regardless of sound military strategy was not available, as MacArthur later observed.[144]

In the closing days of October, the evidence that Chinese troops were involved in North Korea began to accumulate. Truman had received a memorandum on the twentieth from the CIA that the Chinese would be moving into North Korea to establish a protective perimeter around several power plants on the Yalu which serviced

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[142]Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 593, 596. Journalist James Reston felt that Truman also allowed MacArthur to move northward as he wished because the General's political prestige was very high after Inchon and Truman could not afford an open break with his popular field commander. New York Times, November 30, 1950.

[143]MacArthur testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 18-19, 84; MacArthur, Reminiscences, 359. See also, Phillips, Truman Presidency, 323.

[144]MacArthur testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 18-19. See also, MacArthur, Reminiscences, 366.

Manchuria.[145] ROK units close to the Yalu began to engage in battle with Chinese units and on October 26 captured the first prisoners from these units.[146] The prisoners informed their captors that their units had crossed the Yalu on October 16. This was, Truman later wrote, ". . . only one day after General MacArthur had assured me on Wake Island that if any Chinese were to enter Korea they would face certain disaster but that he did not expect them to try anything that foolish."[147] By October 30 there were reports that elements of the Chinese 39th, 40th and 42nd Armies were in North Korea. The Far East Command informed Washington that there was no confirmation of these reports and that the Chinese engaged were probably volunteers."[148] Truman ordered the Joint Chiefs to secure a complete and up-to-date assessment of the Chinese incursion from MacArthur.

On November 4 General MacArthur told the JCS that available combat intelligence was insufficient for the purpose of adequately estimating the degree of Chinese

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[145]Truman, Memoirs, II, 372. See also, Hanson Baldwin, New York Times, October 22, 1950.

[146]Ridgway, Korean War, 51; Millis, Arms and Men, 296. See also, Acheson testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1833; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 462.

[147]Truman, Memoirs, II, 373.

[148]Ridgway, Korean War, 51.

involvement. He felt it was most likely that China would provide some volunteers and military aid surreptitiously to the North Koreans. Regarding a full-scale military intervention by the Chinese Communist Government, MacArthur said, "While it is a distinct possibility . . . there are many fundamental logical reacons against it. . . ."[149] He closed by cautioning against drawing premature conclusions pending accumulation and appraisal of military data.[150] Matthew Ridgway, MacArthur's eventual successor, felt that the Far East Commander "simply closed his ears" and ignored the early signs that the Chinese had crossed the Yalu in force.[151] In a special report to the United Nations on November 5, MacArthur wrote that his forces were in "hostile contact" with Chinese Communist military units.[152] On the following day MacArthur issued a special communiqué which began with the declaration that the North Korean Army had been

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[149]Quoted in Truman, Memoirs, II, 373. See also, Acheson testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1833.

[150]Truman, Memoirs, II, 373. See also, Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 118; Appleman, South to the Naktong, 762; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 463.

[151]Ridgway, Korean War, 47.

[152]MacArthur, "Special Report to the Security Council, United Nations," November 5, 1950, reprinted in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3492-93; New York Times, November 7, 1950. See also, Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 118-19.

decisively beaten and the Korean war had been brought to a "practical end." But the United Nation's Command now faced a "new and fresh army of Communist Chinese." By their actions, MacArthur said, the Chinese Communists ". . . committed one of the most offensive acts of international lawlessness of historic records. . . ."[153] The statement closed by asserting that it was now the mission of the UN Command to destroy the force newly deployed against it in North Korea.[154]

MacArthur had cautioned Washington on November 4 against making hasty judgments regarding Chinese intervention. But on the following day he sent orders to his air chief, General George E. Stratemeyer, telling him to concentrate his forces on the destruction of the Korean end of all bridges crossing the Yalu, as well as means of communication, factories and other installations in North Korea, except for the hydroelectric plants. Stratemeyer's first objective was to take out the bridges connecting

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[153] New York Times, November 6, 1950. Reprinted in MacArthur, Reminiscences, 368. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 376; Appleman, South to the Naktong, 762; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 119; Acheson testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1834.

[154] New York Times, November 6, 1950.

Sinuiju, North Korea and Antung, China.[155] Three hours before the intended strike, Stratemeyer sent a copy of his orders to the Pentagon. Under Secretary of Defense Lovett immediately met with Acheson and Dean Rusk, Assistant Secretary of State. Lovett expressed a fear that MacArthur's order might cause the bombing of the Manchurian city. He also believed that destroying the bridges would not materially affect the flow of Chinese troops into North Korea. Rusk reminded Acheson of the American commitment to consult with Great Britain before moving against Manchurian targets. The three were in agreement that the proposed attack should be postponed pending consultation with the President. Acheson called Secretary of Defense Marshall, who agreed to order the JCS to countermand MacArthur's orders to Stratemeyer, pending new instructions from Truman.[156]

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[155]Truman, Memoirs, II, 374; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 463. See also, Appleman, South to the Naktong, 715; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 68.

[156]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 463; Truman, Memoirs, II, 373-74; Collins, War in Peacetime, 200. Acheson, Truman and Collins all state that the Pentagon copy of MacArthur's orders was sent by General Stratemeyer to Washington, not by MacArthur, thus implying that the latter sought a fait accompli. The official Army history of the war says that the JCS, ". . . received from MacArthur a radio report of the order." See Appleman, South to the Naktong, 715. MacArthur's Reminiscences (p. 368), shed no light on who sent a copy of the orders to Washington, but the General does acknowledge that there was a danger of accidentally bombing Manchuria involved. He

Shortly after talking with Marshall on November 6, Acheson was able to reach the President by telephone in Kansas City, where he had gone to cast his ballot in the off-year elections. After being brought up to date by the Secretary of State, Truman said that he was willing to authorize any action necessary for the safety of the troops. However, MacArthur's last message (on the fourth), had given no indication of movement across the Yalu that would justify such an action. Truman repeated that he wished to do nothing that might jeopardize the United Nations' forces, but approved of the temporary cancellation of the bombing mission until MacArthur explained why the attack was necessary.[157] Accordingly, less than two hours before the massive flight of bombers was to leave its bases in Japan, Truman's countermanding order was radioed to Far East Headquarters by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. MacArthur was informed that the implications of his proposed air strike were being considered on a governmental level. He was told of the need to consult with the British prior to taking action which might involve Manchuria. Until such time as orders were issued

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leaves the impression that the risk was no longer important, since some Chinese forces had become involved in the fighting. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 602-603.

[157]Truman, Memoirs, II, 374-75; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 463-64; Collins, War in Peacetime, 200-201.

to the contrary, MacArthur was instructed to adhere to a previous JCS directive which prohibited him from bombing targets within five miles of the Manchurian border. The Far East Commander was also ordered to provide Washington with a new estimate of the military situation and an explanation for his order to destroy the Yalu bridges.[158]

"It would be impossible to exaggerate my astonishment. . . ," MacArthur has written in describing his reaction to the order suspending the air mission against the Yalu bridges.[159] He quickly drafted a dramatic response to the JCS request for justification. His message said that Chinese troops and military supplies were "pouring" across the target bridges. It was his belief that this movement not only endangered his troops, but also threatened to accomplish the total destruction of the armies under his command. MacArthur said that only destruction of the bridges could prevent reinforcement of the enemy. He also advocated full utilization of his air power to accomplish the destruction of all installations in northern Korea which could contribute to the

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[158]JCS to MacArthur, November 5, 1950, quoted in MacArthur testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 20; Major General Emmett O'Donnell testimony, ibid., Pt. 4, 3090. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 375; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 464; MacArthur, Reminiscences, 368; Appleman, South to the Naktong, 715; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 603.

[159]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 368.

support of the Chinese advance. The unusual, adamant tone of MacArthur's closing lines reveal the fervor of his conviction that his superiors were in error. He appealed over their heads directly to the Commander in Chief:

> I am suspending this strike and carrying out your instructions. What I had ordered is entirely within the scope of the rules of war and the resolutions and directions I have received from the United Nations and constitutes no slightest act of belligerency against Chinese territory, in spite of the outrageous international lawlessness emanating therefrom. I cannot overemphasize the disastrous effect, both physical and psychological, that will result from the restrictions which you are imposing. I trust that the matter be immediately brought to the attention of the President as I believe your instructions may well result in a calamity of major proportion for which I cannot accept the responsibility without his personal and direct understanding of the situation. . . .[160]

Upon receipt of this message in Washington, General Bradley called the President and read him the text. Truman was very concerned about the danger of precipitating a far wider war. "But," he wrote, "since General MacArthur was on the scene and felt so strongly that this was of unusual urgency, I told Bradley to give him the

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[160]Telecon, MacArthur to JCS, November 6, 1950, (Nov. 7, Tokyo), reprinted in Truman, Memoirs, II, 375. General Collins has described as an "extraordinary request," MacArthur's request that the matter be brought directly to the President. War in Peacetime, 201. For copies of the paraphrased text of this message, see MacArthur, Reminiscences, 368-69; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 603; Far East Hearings, Pt. 4, 3090; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 464; Appleman, South to the Naktong, 715-16; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 325.

'go-ahead.'"[161] In their message transmitting the President's decision to MacArthur, the Joint Chiefs apparently could not resist chiding MacArthur for the extreme difference between the situations depicted in his messages of the fourth and sixth. They acknowledged that bombing the bridges would contribute to the security of his forces, but, since this action might bring full intervention by China or the Soviet Union, his force would be in greater danger and the war vastly extended to a degree dangerous to American self-interest. However, MacArthur was allowed to proceed with his bombardment. The directive expressly enjoined against attacks on dams or hydroelectric plants along the Yalu.[162] The new concept of limited warfare is evident throughout the message. Most notably, MacArthur was advised to be absolutely certain not to violate Manchurian soil or airspace, ". . . because it is vital in the national interests of

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[161]Truman, Memoirs, II, 375-76. MacArthur later testified that it was his "violent protest" which caused rescinding of the countermand, see Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 20.

[162]Quoted in Truman, Memoirs, II, 376. See also, Bradley testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 741; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 464; Collins, War in Peacetime, 201-202; Appleman, South to the Naktong, 716. Within a few days the bridges were knocked out. However, less than two weeks later the Yalu was frozen over, allowing the passage of even the heaviest military equipment. See Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 604.

the U.S. to localize the fighting in Korea. . . ."[163]

A military intelligence estimate by MacArthur arrived in Washington on November 7. In it the Far East Commander reaffirmed his belief that the Chinese intervention did not constitute a full-scale intervention. But the General did add that the troops which had crossed the Yalu could be reinforced to the point where they could check the completion of his advance northward and, possibly, force him into a retrograde movement. MacArthur said he intended to advance against these new units in order to estimate their potential strength.[164] Truman already had in hand a Central Intelligence Report (dated November 6) which estimated that about two hundred thousand Chinese troops were poised in a striking position in Manchuria. The CIA estimate was in agreement with MacArthur that intervention by these troops would halt his advance and probably force a retreat. The drafter of the report were convinced that China was aware that such involvement could bring about a general war. The CIA

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[163]Quoted in Truman, Memoirs, II, 376. The following day, Secretary Marshall wrote to MacArthur, telling him he appreciated the difficulty faced in fighting a limited war, but that conditions made it unavoidable. Marshall is quoted in MacArthur, Reminiscences, 370. The text of Marshall's letter also appears in Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 71.

[164]Quoted in Truman, Memoirs, II, 377. See also, Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1834.

also told Truman that the Soviet Union was not inclined to join directly in the Korean fighting but hoped to keep the United States deeply involved there, thus allowing them freer rein in Europe.[165]

In a second message on November 7 General MacArthur told of the ever-increasing number of Russian-built MIG-15 jet fighter aircraft that were attacking his air units operating near the Yalu. The MIG's were using very effective hit-and-run tactics, striking quickly and then breaking contact and retreating across the border into Manchurian airspace. Since MacArthur had been ordered not to penetrate the border, pursuing aircraft had to halt at the Yalu River, the area beyond constituting a sanctuary. The General described this as an "abnormal condition" having a debilitating effect on combat efficiency and the morale of air and ground troops. He requested new instructions from Washington.[166] What MacArthur wanted was the right of "hot pursuit," which he subsequently defined as permission ". . . to pursue an attacking enemy plane to the death, whether it was over the border line or not."[167]

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[165]Truman, Memoirs, II, 376, 378; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 606.

[166]MacArthur to JCS, November 7, 1950, quoted in Truman, Memoirs, II, 377.

[167]MacArthur testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 12.

The principle involved in "hot pursuit" was clearly established in international law and by historical precedents involving the rules of warfare.[168] The Joint Chiefs of Staff, Defense Department, State Department and the President were all willing to allow this latitude to pursuing aircraft.[169] Secretary Acheson believed it proper to inform the other nations with forces involved in Korea that such an order was to be issued. Accordingly, on November 13, he dispatched a message to the American embassies in the nations concerned asking the ambassador to inform the government to which he was accredited that United Nations aircraft might soon be granted permission to pursue attacking aircraft up to a limit of three minutes flying time into Manchuria. Acheson concluded his message by saying that since only limited application of the pursuit doctrine was involved and because the order was based on "military necessity and elementary principles of self-defense," the concurrence of the respective countries was not being sought.[170]

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[168]Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 604.

[169]Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 887-88, 1388; Pt. 3, 1722-24. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 604; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 70.

[170]For text of letter, see Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1928. Those governments, aside from the U.S. and Korea, contributing military forces to the fighting by mid-November, 1950, were Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Netherlands, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand, Turkey and the United Kingdom. See ibid., Pt. 3, 1929.

Concurrence of the allies was not requested in Acheson's notification that "hot pursuit" might be employed, but they responded--unanimously and negatively--to the whole idea. The ambassadors reported that these nations regarded hostile action over Manchuria as undesirable and dangerous. In the face of such general opposition, the matter was dropped.[171] The President's views on the aerial pursuit question are not altogether clear. Acheson does not recall Truman being consulted at all.[172] In his memoirs, Truman did not offer any personal judgment on the question, he merely recorded MacArthur's message asking for a new directive to meet the situation. However, he follows MacArthur's message with some general commentary which reveals his concept of how he had to conduct this unique type of limited, coalition warfare:

> . . . I valued the expression of MacArthur's opinions, and so did the Joint Chiefs. There was never any question about my high regard for MacArthur's military judgment. But as President I had to listen to more than military judgments, and my decisions had to be made on the basis of not just one theater of operations but of a much more comprehensive picture of our nation's place in the world.
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> . . . neither he (MacArthur) nor I would have been justified if we had gone beyond the mission that the United Nations General Assembly had given us.
>
> There was no doubt in my mind that we should not

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[171] Acheson testimony, ibid., 1722-24, 1735-36. See also, MacArthur, Reminiscences, 365.

[172] Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1723. Truman says that the "hot pursuit" inquiries were submitted to the nations concerned with his approval. Memoirs, II, 382.

> allow the action in Korea to extend into a general war. All-out military action against China had to be avoided, if for no other reason than because it was a gigantic booby trap.[173]

The deep misunderstanding that developed between the Commander in Chief and his field commander was not lessened by these limitations imposed on the conduct of operations above the thirty-eighth parallel. The restrictive policy Truman adopted was designed to avoid any activity that would alienate American allies or serve to justify the enemy's expansion of the conflict into a general war. Nor were these self-imposed limitations designed solely to prevent the onset of World War III. They were also part of an "implicit bargain" with the Communists. Although Truman did not allow MacArthur to violate the Manchurian sanctuary in any manner, the enemy allowed the United States a privileged sanctuary. For example, enemy air power was very rarely employed against American ground units, supply depots, railroads, or bridges. Shipping was not endangered by enemy actions. Port facilities could offload military supplies at night, fully illuminated and inviolate. While it is difficult to speculate on the enemy's motivations, save to suggest that they, too, may not have desired a general war ". . . it is important to remember that they <u>did</u> fight under

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[173]Truman, <u>Memoirs</u>, II, 377-78.

limitations that were quite as restrictive as our own."[174]

Amidst the uncertainties of Chinese Communist intentions in the first week of November, Truman instructed the JCS to provide him with their recommendations respecting intervention. The President was given a three-point memorandum on November 8. The Joint Chiefs recommended first, that all available political and diplomatic means should be employed to assure China that the UN forces in North Korea did not constitute a threat to their security. Secondly, since the military objectives and degree ofinvolvement by the Chinese Communists were still unknown, orders should remain unchanged, pending later review. Lastly, all planning and preparations by the United States should henceforth be predicated on the assumption that the possibility of global conflict had been increased.[175]

The National Security Council met on November 9 to discuss the JCS recommendations and review the changing

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[174]Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 605. General Ridgway agrees that the UN forces enjoyed a privileged sanctuary, ". . . without which the Korean War could have been a far more tragic story." Korean War, 75. See also, Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 277-79; Morton H. Halperin, "The Limiting Process in the Korean War," in Guttman (ed.), Korea and the Theory of Limited War, 92-106, passim. Hereinafter cited as Halperin, "limiting Process in Korean War."

[175]Truman, Memoirs, II, 378; Collins, War In Peacetime, 206.

conditions of the war. Truman was not present. Speaking for the Joint Chiefs, Bradley said that the Chinese had three possible intentions: establishing a buffer zone to protect the hydroelectric facilities along the Yalu; forcing the United States to fight a war of attrition that would weaken the nation decisively in the event of a global conflict with the Soviet Union; driving the UN command completely off the Korean peninsula. If the latter was their objective, Bradley stated, they would require a degree of Soviet assistance that might bring about another world war. MacArthur should be able to hold off an attack along his present line, but the proscription against attacking Manchurian bases left this questionable. Bradley did not agree with MacArthur that destroying the Yalu bridges could halt the Chinese. General Bedell Smith of the CIA noted that the Yalu would soon freeze over and be passable without bridges. Secretary Marshall told the council members that MacArthur's eastern flank was dangerously thin and dispersed over a very wide area. Marshall explained that this was done so that MacArthur could carry out his primary objective to pacify, occupy, and hold elections in North Korea. The meeting ended in general accord with the principles expressed in the JCS

memorandum of the eighth.[176] The Joint Chiefs' memorandum and the Security Council meeting demonstrated that Truman's civil and military advisers agreed on the potential capacity of Chinese forces to destroy what had been accomplished. But they could not solve the riddle of Chinese intentions, so they agreed that MacArthur's strategic disposition should remain unchanged while the Administration sought answers through indirect diplomacy.

What Truman's advisers did not know was that while they deliberated the Chinese were in the process of completing a massive infiltration into North Korea. MacArthur, after his earlier concern that the Chinese constituted a genuine threat to his forces, was convinced, from November 9 until the last days of the month, that the Air Force could prevent any major Chinese reinforcement across the Yalu and that his ground forces would soon dispatch the remaining opposition in North Korea. His reports in this period reflect calm assurance and heartening optimism.[177] Meanwhile, the Chinese Communist Forces were moving the last units of a force of 300,000 into the mountains of North Korea. Moving only at night,

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[176]Truman, Memoirs, II, 378-80. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 606-607; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 465-66; Collins, War in Peacetime, 206-208; Neustadt, Presidential Power, 134-37.

[177]Ridgway, Korean War, 60.

in a very effective "march and bivouac" discipline, the Chinese had accomplished one of the great secret mass troop movements in military history. American military intelligence, serial observers and aerial photographs all failed entirely to detect this infiltration which had begun some time in October.[178]

As part of the diplomatic initiatives recommended to Truman by the Joint Chiefs, a resolution was introduced in the UN Security Council on November 10. It asked the Chinese to desist from continued intervention in Korea and affirmed that it was UN policy, ". . . to hold the Chinese frontier with Korea inviolate and fully to protect legitimate Chinese and Korean interests in the frontier zone."[179] Speaking in support of the resolution in a public statement on November 16, his remarks clearly directed at China, Truman said that the United States fully endorsed and was acting within the scope of limits imposed by United Nations policy in Korea. He said that American policy "never at any time" envisioned carrying

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[178]Appleman, South to the Naktong, 770; Esposito (ed.), West Point Atlas, II, Sec. 3, Map Plate No. 9. Regarding this undetected infiltration, Senator Leverett Saltonstall asked Acheson: "They really fooled us when it comes right down to it, didn't they?" Acheson replied, "Yes, sir." Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1835.

[179]Doc. No. 13, Joint Resolution in the Security Council, November 10, 1950, United States Policy in the Korean Conflict, 22-23.

November 21. But on the northwestern flank, Eighth Army, advancing in widely separated columns, was finding it increasingly difficult to move forward.[184]

In mid-November, as MacArthur planned his offensive, there had been growing concern over the deployment of his forces. Apparently General Ridgway was the first to note the danger in the tactical dispositions, wherein Eighth Army in the west and Tenth Corps in the east were not linked together or advancing at the same pace. In addition, these two forces were subdivided into unattached columns dispersed over a wide front. Given the logistical problems being encountered, the mountainous terrain, the oncoming winter and the possibility of major Chinese intervention, the United Nations Command could be in jeopardy.[185] This situation was a principal subject for discussion between the Secretaries of State and Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff in a meeting together on November 21. When Acheson expressed concern over the scattered forces, Marshall and Bradley said they were not prepared to order a change in MacArthur's troop dispositions since they were seven thousand miles from the front. Acheson concluded that their reluctance to ask the

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[184]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 365-66.

[185]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 467; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 602.

the war into Chinese territory.[180] The Security Council resolution was vetoed by the Soviet Union on November 30, 1950.[181]

On November 11 units of General Walker's Eighth Army advancing northward encountered stiff resistance just above the Chongchon (Ch'ongch'on) River. Walker reported to MacArthur that the opposition came from ". . . fresh, well-organized, and well-trained units, some of which were Chinese Communist forces."[182] Six days later, determined to test the full extent of Chinese involvement and, if possible, complete the conquest of North Korea, General MacArthur informed the Pentagon that he intended to launch a general offensive on November 24, designed to bring his whole line of advance up to the Yalu.[183] Before the offensive got off, forward elements of Tenth Corps on the eastern flank reached the Yalu on

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[180]Item No. 287, Press Conference, November 16, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 711-12. Text of Truman's statement can also be found in New York Times, November 17, 1950; Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3494; Doc. No. 14, United States Policy in the Korean Conflict, 23.

[181]The resolution had been sponsored by the United States, United Kingdom, France, Cuba, Ecuador and Norway. Doc. No. 13, United States Policy in the Korean Conflict, footnote, 22.

[182]Quoted in Ridgway, Korean War, 59.

[183]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 467. MacArthur explained the reasons why he considered this advance necessary in his Reminiscences, 171-72. See also, Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 129-33.

President for an order changing the deployment was based on an underlying respect for the "MacArthur mystique" and a lack of desire to restrain "the sorcerer of Inchon."[186] General Bradley testified (in 1951) that he would certainly have deployed the troops differently.[187] However, at the meeting of November 21, 1950, the generals, while expressing great apprehension, would not countermand the commander in the field. And, as Acheson later wrote, "I was unwilling to urge on the President a military course that his military advisers would not propose."[188] This reluctance among Truman's advisers left him unaware of the potential danger to these forces for which he was ultimately responsible. The Joint Chiefs were concerned enough to send MacArthur a message on the twenty-fourth suggesting that he halt his advance on the high ground which dominated the approaches from the Yalu Valley. The Far East Commander responded by saying that it would be

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[186]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 467.

[187]Bradley gave a full explanation of his position regarding MacArthur's troops dispositions in response to questions from Senator J. William Fulbright, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 972-75, 1143-45.

[188]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 468; Ridgway, Korean War, 61. For MacArthur's defense of his dispositions, see Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 19, 192, 246-47; MacArthur, Reminiscences, 359-60. For an excellent analysis of why Truman's major advisers were reluctant to go to him for decision, see Neustadt, Presidential Power, 138-40.

"utterly impossible" to halt his advance at that line. He also offered his personal view that Chinese plans could not be altered by American timidity.[189]

General MacArthur flew to Eighth Army headquarters on the Congchon River on November 24 to launch personally the "final" offensive. He announced that the assault should bring an end to the war. MacArthur also told his corps commanders that he hoped American troops could be pulled out of Korea by Christmas.[190] On the flight to Korea, the General had ordered his plane to fly along the Yalu so that he might observe the area for himself. Upon his return to Tokyo, MacArthur issued a statement saying, "An air reconnaissance behind the enemy's line and along the entire length of the Yalu River border showed little sign of hostile military activity."[191] On the day of this

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[189]Texts of the messages exchanged between the JCS and MacArthur are in Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1229-30. See also, MacArthur, Reminiscences, 373; Rovere and Schlesinger, The General and the President, 141-42; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 609; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 125-26. General Ridgway describes MacArthur's stubborn insistence on advancing to the Yalu as comparable to General Custer's behavior at Little Big Horn. Korean War, 76-77.

[190]New York Times, November 24, 25, 1950; MacArthur, Reminiscences, 372. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 381; Ridgway, Korean War, 60. A discussion of MacArthur's unfortunate "home by Christmas" statement was held in a National Security Council session on November 28. Truman describes the commentary in his Memoirs, II, 386-87. See also, Acheson, Present at the Creation, 471.

[191]New York Times, November 25, 1950.

statement, Far East Headquarters had been provided with a copy of a CIA report which estimated that the minimal response from the Chinese Communists that could be expected was an increase in their military operations. They would, the CIA claimed, seek to immobilize the United Nations forces, wage a prolonged war of attrition and attempt to preserve the semblance of a Communist North Korean state. But the Chinese had sufficient strength, if employed, to force the UN armies into withdrawal and a defensive posture.[192]

The first two days of the offensive went well against light opposition. But on November 26, 200,000 Chinese Communist troops struck in the wide gap between Eighth Army and Tenth Corps. In a matter of hours they had swept through the ROK Second Corps and all but eliminated the right flank of Eighth Army.[193] Walker's army began a retreat that continued until the Chinese temporarily broke contact, a distance of some forty miles. In the eastern sector, Tenth Corps advance units--First Marine Division and Seventeenth Infantry Regiment--were surrounded and cut

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[192]Truman, Memoirs, II, 381.

[193]New York Times, November 25, 1950. See also, Ridgway, Korean War, 69; MacArthur, Reminiscences, 374.

off by several Chinese divisions.[194]

It was the President's usual routine to meet with the White House staff before his business day began. On November 28, in a quiet, solemn voice, he told the staff that he had received a telephone call from General Bradley at six-fifteen that morning. The Chairman of the JCS had told Truman of a "terrible message" just received from the Far East. "MacArthur said there were two hundred and sixty thousand Chinese troops against him out there. . , ," Truman told his staff. "He says he's stymied. He says he has to go over to the defensive. . . . The Chinese have come in with both feet."[195] MacArthur acknowledged that the Chinese attack had shattered the hopes he had entertained that his offensive would bring a prompt end to the fighting: "We face," he said, "an entirely new war."[196]

Truman convened a special session of the National Security Council on the twenty-eighth to examine policy in light of the dramatic reversal of military fortunes in

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[194]Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 610; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 326; MacArthur, Reminiscences, 374.

[195]Truman is quoted in Hersey, "Profiles," Pt. 2, 52. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 385.

[196]Quoted in Acheson, Present at the Creation, 469. See also, MacArthur, Reminiscences, 375; Truman, Memoirs, II, 384; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 326; Collins, War in Peacetime, 220-21; Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, 377; Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1834.

Korea. All of the President's military advisers--the Secretaries of Defense, Army, Navy, Air Force and the Joint Chiefs of Staff--were in full agreement that the war had to remain limited. The United States should not allow itself to be drawn into a general war with China. Not only could the Communists draw on an enormous manpower reserve, but no additional reinforcements would be available for Korea until March of 1951. Additionally, an all-out war against China would necessitate halting the build-up of the military defenses of Western Europe (which was a primary objective set by NSC-68, the global policy statement drafted by this same Council).[197] The President's advisers offered no recommendations for his decision, being content, for the time being, to wait for the battlefield situation to clarify.

MacArthur was left in a very difficult position. The prohibitions against bombing Manchuria and the Yalu dams and hydroelectric stations remained, as did the denial of hot pursuit. While the United Nations Command was badly outnumbered and facing a fresh enemy, their commander was informed that he should not expect even limited reinforcements until the following March and few

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[197]Truman, Memoirs, II, 385-86; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 469. See also, Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, 377-78. For Truman's analysis of the international situation which determined his limited response in Korea at the time (November, 1950), see Memoirs, II, 380-81.

replacements before January.[198] On November 29 a message arrived from General MacArthur asking the Administration to accept the offer of thirty-three thousand Chinese Nationalist troops made by Chiang Kai-shek at the outset of the war. After a long talk with the State and Defense Departments, Truman ordered the JCS to tell MacArthur that the subject was under study. But the message made it clear that for numerous diplomatic reasons, the proposal was not favorably received.[199]

MacArthur's "general offensive" of November 24, which he subsequently referred to as a "reconnaissance in force," had at least answered the question of Chinese intentions.[200] His critics have called the operation "a

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[198]Truman, Memoirs, II, 386-87; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 469, 471. While MacArthur continuously requested authority to bomb Manchuria and blockade the China coast, he never requested that his ground forces be used to invade mainland China. In his testimony in 1951 he characterized such a suggestion as "utterly reckless" and "ridiculous." Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 29, 43.

[199]JCS to MacArthur, November 29, 1950, printed in Truman, Memoirs, II, 385. See also, MacArthur, Reminiscences, 375-76.

[200]MacArthur to Frank W. Boykin, December 13, 1950. Truman Papers, OF, 471-B - Korean Emergency, Truman Library. See also, MacArthur testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 21. Army Chief of Staff Collins testified that the advance by MacArthur was not a "reconnaissance in force," but a full-scale offensive designed to destroy the remaining NKPA forces. See ibid., Pt. 5, 3495.

first class American defeat"[201] and "one of the most ignominious defeats in American history."[202] MacArthur denied this, saying that his advance was designed to determine enemy capability and that his reversal was a strategic withdrawal, accomplished in "magnificent order and shape."[203] The truth lies somewhere between these extremes, but it is worthwhile to note that--at the time--Truman's faith in MacArthur's generalship had not waivered. Queried about the developing crisis, Truman said:

> People who don't know military affairs except everthing to go well all the time. They don't understand. A general can't be a winner every day of the week. The greatest of generals have had to take reverses. I advise you to study the lives of Alexander the Great, Tamerlane, Gustavus Adolphus, Hunyadi--and Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson. You'll find they all won most of the time, but they all had their troubles, too. I'm not upset, like most people, about these reverses MacArthur is taking.[204]

The Chinese continued to press their advantage in the last days of November. They had driven a large wedge between the Eighth Army and Tenth Corps. The CCF

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[201]Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 133.

[202]Rovere and Schlesinger, The General and the President, 152.

[203]MacArthur testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 21. See also, MacArthur, Reminiscences, 374.

[204]Quoted in Hersey, "Profiles," Pt. 1, 43.

apparently planned to envelop the inland flanks of both commands, drive them into defensive pockets on the coasts and destroy them. Meanwhile, the major thrust of the Chinese attack would advance southward through the central breach down the entire peninsula.[205] In a message received by the Joint Chiefs on November 30, MacArthur explained that if enemy pressure continued to develop as it was at the time, he would contract the Tenth Corps into a defensive sector between the deep-water ports of Hungnam and Wonsan on the eastern seaboard.[206] Replying the same day, the Joint Chiefs expressed concern over the exposed positions of Tenth Corps. They suggested that MacArthur attempt a coordination of Eighth Army with Tenth Corps sufficient enough to prevent their being outflanked or allowing any large CCF force to advance between them. If it became necessary, Tenth Corps should be evacuated.[207]

On the morning these messages were being exchanged, the President held a press conference. He began by reading a statement to the reporters regarding Chinese intervention, which he described as a "new act of

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[205]Esposito (ed.), West Point Atlas, II, Sec. 3, Map Plate No. 9.

[206]MacArthur to JCS, November 30, 1950, printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1146.

[207]JCS to MacArthur, November 30, 1950, ibid., 1145-46. See also, Collins, War in Peacetime, 227-28.

aggression in Korea" by which China was being ". . . forced or deceived into serving the ends of Russian colonial policy in Asia."[208] While the battlefield situation was then uncertain, Truman said that the United Nations did not intend to abandon its mission. He described the attack as just a part of a global pattern which endangered all free nations and emphasized the necessity for reapidly expanding military defenses and establishing an integrated NATO force in Europe. The President said that he would immediately submit a request to Congress for supplemental appropriations, which would include additional funds for the Atomic Energy Commission, as well as the Army, Navy, and Air Force. The purpose of these budgetary requests would be to expand the size of the armed forces and increase the effectiveness of the entire military-defense system.[209]

Following his statement, Truman opened the press conference to questions. Early in the course of this meeting Truman defended MacArthur by explaining that he, as Commander in Chief, was kept fully informed by the General of "every detail" in his tactical planning. As

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[208] Item No. 295, Press Conference, November 30, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 724-25.

[209] Ibid. The text of Truman's statement also appears in New York Times, December 1, 1950; Truman, Memoirs, II, 388-90; Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3496-97.

the questioners persisted, Truman responded by telling them that MacArthur was doing a good job and had not exceeded his command authority. To further questioning, Truman revealed that he was still not going to use Nationalist Chinese troops in Korea and, while refusing to say whether MacArthur would be allowed to bomb beyond the Yalu, did acknowledge that if the UN authorized such a step, it would be taken. Elaborating on the latter point, the President said that he was prepared to take whatever steps were necessary to meet the new military situation. A reporter asked if this included use of the atomic bomb. Truman replied: "That includes every weapon we have."[210] Continuing, in response to several more queries, the President went on to say that while the atomic bomb was a "terrible weapon" he did not want to employ, its use in the Korean War was, and always had been, under active consideration.[211] Asked if atomic weapons would be used against military or civilian objectives, the President said: "It's a matter that the military people will have to

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[210] Item No. 295, Press Conference, November 30, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 727.

[211] Ibid.; Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, 398; Truman, Memoirs, II, 395. See also, Stone, Hidden History of the Korean War, 199; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 329; Millis, Arms and Men, 299. In response to a reporter's question in a press conference in July, Truman had said that he was not considering use of the atomic bomb in Korea. See Item No. 203, Press Conference, July 27, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 562.

decide. I'm not a military authority that passes on those things."[212] Truman's answer makes little sense. He was the only human being in the world who had ever decided on the use of atomic devices and the type of target they were to be used against. After World War II he had wisely insisted that atomic weapons policy decisions rest exclusively with the commander in chief. The President's exclusive control of nuclear weaponry was emphasized in a clarifying statement issued by the White House shortly after the press conference ended.[213] American allies, most notably Great Britain, later required additional assurance that the bomb would not be used.[214]

The message to Congress requesting supplemental appropriations was sent up on December 1, 1950. In it the

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[212]Item No. 295, Press Conference, November 30, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 727.

[213]White House Press Release, November 30, 1950, copy in Truman Papers, OF, 471-B - Korean Emergency, Truman Library.

[214]British Prime Minister Clement Atlee flew to Washington on December 4 to receive personal reassurances from Truman respecting atomic policy. For accounts of their conversations, see Truman, Memoirs, II, 396-413; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 483-84; Warren, President as World Leader, 339-40; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 166-67; LaFeber, America, Russia, and the Cold War, 112; O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 27-28; "President's Communique of December 8, 1950, regarding His Conferences with Prime Minister Atlee," Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, Appendix G, 3501-504; Item No. 301, Joint Statement Following Discussions with the Prime Minister of Great Britain, December 8, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 738-40.

President requested an additional $1.05 billion be provided the Atomic Energy Commission to increase its capacity to produce fissionable materials and fabricate nuclear weapons. He asked that $16.8 billion more be added to the Department of Defense budget for fiscal 1951. Truman said that this latter increment was necessary to sustain America's military participation in the UN action in Korea and ". . . to increase the size and readiness of our armed forces should action become necessary in other parts of the world."[215] The President's message justified the need for additional funds and forces with much the same logic and language employed in the statement he read to his press conference the previous day. To Truman the Chinese attack was but one facet of a global strategy directed by the Soviet Union. In the process of implementing this policy, the Russians were knowingly running the risk of bringing on a third world war. Truman's assumption was neither provable nor subject to documented refutation. But it became the operating premise which guided the determination of American military policy for the remainder of his administration. In retrospect, while China's intervention may

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[215]Item No. 296, Special Message to Congress Requesting Additional Appropriations for Defense, December 1, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 728-31. Full text of this message is reprinted in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, Appendix F, 3497-3501. Truman signed the Second Supplemental Appropriation Act of 1951 (64 Stat. 1223), on January 6, 1951.

have neatly meshed with existing Soviet policy, national self-interest was the most likely primal determinant. The Chinese border was threatened by a large armed force representing a hostile political ideology. China intervened, at least in part, to preserve a neighboring Communist nation's existence.[216] However, it would be inaccurate to conclude that the President overreacted to the Chinese incursion by falsely assuming that it was part of a Soviet master plot. The Central Intelligence Agency had provided him with a great deal of data substantiating just such a conclusion. This intelligence appreciation was concurred in by Secretaries Marshall and Acheson.[217] It could well be that the American build-up and countervailing movements frustrated Soviet intentions.

In a lengthy report to the JCS on December 3, MacArthur described the situation of Eighth Army as "increasingly critical" and said that he was moving Tenth Corps into a beachhead as rapidly as possible. The UN Commander said that the suggestion of a continuous defensive line across the peninsula was militarily unsound because of the size of the enemy forces. MacArthur claimed his air power was diminished by the terrain and

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[216]Item No. 296, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 728; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 617-18.

[217]Truman, Memoirs, II, 390-91; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 473-74.

"enormously" hampered by the prohibition against attacking across the international boundary. Because the enemy was concentrating force along deep interior lines, amphibious maneuvers and naval gunfire support were rendered ineffective. Thus MacArthur's air and naval superiority were of little use. He said that unless he received ground reinforcements "of the greatest magnitude," he would have to continue a costly withdrawal tactic or form beachhead bastions. MacArthur continued:

> This small command actually under present conditions is facing the entire Chinese nation in an undeclared war and unless some positive and immediate action is taken. . . , attrition leading to final destruction can reasonably be contemplated. . . .
>
> The directives under which I am operating based upon the North Korean Forces as an enemy are completely outmoded by events. . . . This calls for political decisions and strategic plans in implementation thereof, adequate fully to meet the realities involved.[218]

MacArthur's message, which Army Secretary Lovett described as a "posterity paper,"[219] prompted a meeting between officials of the Defense and State Departments and a subsequent meeting with Truman. In the Pentagon session the military advisers expressed the belief that

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[218]MacArthur to JCS, December 3, 1950, quoted in Truman, Memoirs, II, 391-93. See also, Collins, War in Peacetime, 228-29; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 86; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 137-38; Sherman testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1617.

[219]Quoted in Acheson, Present at the Creation, 474.

MacArthur's forces would face a crisis within three days. They believed that Tenth Corps had to be evacuated and that Walker's Eighth Army might eventually be forced to evacuate as well, unless a cease-fire could be arranged. Acheson opposed asking for a cease-fire. Evacuation of all UN forces from the Korean peninsula--they were all agreed--should be undertaken only as a last resort. MacArthur's decision not to attempt to form a continuous defensive line would not be countermanded.[220] The reason for this, as explained by the Army Chief of Staff, was that it was the "established policy" of the JCS not to override a theater commander.[221] Apparently the Joint Chiefs reasoned that MacArthur, conducting the war in Korea from Japan, four hundred miles away, had a better perspective than they did in Washington, seven thousand miles from the battlefield. There may have been another reason. General Ridgway, as the meeting ended, asked General Vandenberg, the Air Force Chief, why the JCS did not simply tell MacArthur what to do. Vandenberg responded, "What good would that do? He wouldn't obey the orders. What can we do?"[222]

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[220] Ibid., 475.

[221] Collins, War in Peacetime, 229.

[222] Ridgway, Korean War, 62.

The President was apprised of the conclusions reached in this session shortly afterward by Marshall and Acheson. He immediately ordered the JCS to dispatch a message to MacArthur which read: "We consider that the preservation of your forces is now the primary consideration. Consolidation of forces into beachheads is concurred in."[223] During this meeting with Truman, the Secretary of State urged him to declare a state of national emergency. Acheson reasoned that this would alert the public to the serious situation the Government faced as well as provide the President with the extraordinary powers he would now need to control wages, prices and production. Truman accepted the Secretary's suggestion and preparations to take this step were initiated.[224] Also, on the suggestion of Marshall and Acheson, the President directed that General Collins depart immediately for Tokyo and Korea to assess the combat situation and discuss operational planning with General MacArthur.[225]

Collins returned on December 8 to report his

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[223]Quoted in Truman, Memoirs, II, 393. Truman said that all his military advisers told him that holding the beachheads would be impossible. He said he wanted them to try, anyway. See ibid., 399. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 617; Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, 381.

[224]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 475-76.

[225]Collins, War in Peacetime, 229; Truman, Memoirs, II, 393. See also, Acheson, Present at the Creation, 472, 475.

findings to the President in a meeting held in the Cabinet Room of the White House. Also present were British Prime Minister Atlee, the British Ambassador, Sir Oliver Franks, General Bradley and Secretaries Marshall and Acheson. The Army Chief of Staff explained to this gathering that it was no longer possible to hold the Seoul-Inchon area. He reported that General Walker felt he could hold again in the Pusan region, especially if he was reinforced by the Tenth Corps which, by now, MacArthur agreed, would have to be evacuated from the Hungnam-Wonsan bridgehead on the eastern coastline.[226]

Recalling his conversations with the Far East Commander, Collins said that MacArthur believed that there were now three possible courses of action open: First, to continue fighting under the existing limitations against bombing Manchurian bases, using Formosan troops, imposing a naval blockade, or providing large-scale reinforcements. This, MacArthur believed, would be tantamount to surrender and would inevitably result in his command being driven from Korea entirely. Second, all the named restrictions could be dropped. In addition, Chinese Nationalist troops should be encouraged to attack South China. MacArthur favored this course. Third, if the Chinese Communist armies voluntarily confined themselves north of the

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[226]Collins, War in Peacetime, 232-33.

thirty-eighth parallel, the United Nations could negotiate an armistice on that basis. If the second alternative was unacceptable, MacArthur felt the third course to be the next most desirable.[227]

After recording Collins' report of MacArthur's views in his memoirs, Truman wrote of his dismay that he and the United Nations Commander were so far from agreement. Truman believed that the alternative MacArthur favored--particularly the introduction of Nationalists troops into South China--might well bring on an all-out general war, probably, an atomic war. "I was left," Truman wrote, "with just one simple conclusion: General MacArthur was ready to risk general war. I was not."[228]

In the early days of December Truman was subjected to severe pressures as numerous interest groups tried to influence his thinking on the Korean crisis. Much of this activity was based on press reports, which in turn were based on information emenating from MacArthur's headquarters, to the effect that the General could win the war were it not for the unparalleled restrictions placed upon

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[227]Truman, Memoirs, II, 415. See also, Collins, War in Peacetime, 231-32. Sherman testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1617-18, 1628-30; Pt. 4, 2956-57; Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, 405; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 91-92.

[228]Truman, Memoirs, II, 415-16.

him by the Truman Administration.[229] In a letter dated December 6 the national commanders of the four largest veteran's organizations in America petitioned the President to ". . . give General MacArthur full authority to employ such means as may be necessary. . . ." These ex-warriors told Truman he must end the restrictions and delays and lift the "imposed limitations" because American soldiers ". . . must not be sacrificed to delusions of appeasement."[230] In a joint letter on the fifth, eight Congressmen urged Truman to resist the pressures put on him by "buy peace in the Orient" by appeasing the Chinese Communists. They also wanted to know why he had not used the Nationalist Chinese troops, who could make an important military contribution, and would also serve to refute the charge that Korea represented an attack by white men on orientals.[231] Senator Joseph McCarthy wired the

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[229]Ibid., 415. In an interview on December 1, for example, MacArthur said that prohibition against striking at Manchurian bases was a terrible handicap "without precedent in military history." Quoted in Acheson, Present at the Creation, 471-72. For similar statements by MacArthur, see Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 342, 570-71. Truman finally caused a directive to be issued on December 6 which had the effect of ordering MacArthur to clear policy statements through the Pentagon. See Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 150-51.

[230]Earl Cocke, Jr. to Truman, December 6, 1950, Truman Papers, OF, 471-B - Korean Emergency, Truman Library.

[231]Brooks Hays, Walter Judd, Kenneth Keating, et. al., to the President, December 5, 1950, ibid.

President on December 2, saying that American mothers demanded to knw why he was allowing Acheson and the rest of the "crimson clique in the State Department" to "run amuck" with the lives of American soldiers. It would be necessary to impeach Truman unless he ended "this treasonable farce," removed Acheson, and brought the Formosan forces into the fight.[232] John Chang, the Korean Ambassador, met with the President on December 6, imploring him to continue the military action in Korea in spite of the reversals. Truman assured the Ambassador that he would do all within his power to save Korea.[233] A day earlier the Chairman of the Korean National Assembly had informed Truman that a successful conclusion to the existing crisis called for an increase in American military assistance to build up the ROK forces.[234] The strain is evident in a diary note the President wrote on December 9: "I have worked for peace for five years and six months and it looks like World War III is near. I hope not--but

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[232]Joseph R. McCarthy to Truman, December 2, 1950 (Telegram), ibid.

[233]Memorandum of Conversation, John F. Simmons (Chief of Protocol), December 6, 1950. Truman Papers, OF, 471, Truman Library.

[234]P. H. Shinicky to Truman, December 5, 1950 (Telegram), Truman Papers, OF, 471-B - Korean Emergency, Truman Library.

we must meet whatever comes--and we will."[235]

Truman called a meeting of the National Security Council on December 11 to discuss with them a cease-fire resolution soon to be proposed in the General Assembly. The President told his advisers that he and Prime Minister Atlee had agreed not to seek a cease-fire in Korea unilaterally, but that they were undecided as to what position to assume with regard to the forthcoming resolution, sponsored by thirteen Asiatic nations. Additionally, he informed them that he had an understanding with Atlee that tne UN command would not surrender; it would only leave Korea if driven off the peninsula by force of arms.[236] The Joint Chiefs and Secretary of Defense opposed a cease-fire for the present, particularly one without preconditions. Truman said he had no intention of accepting any armistice without first arriving at terms. Secretary Marshall asked the President if MacArthur should be ordered to withdraw to the thirty-eighth parallel in anticipation of it becoming the cease-fire line. Truman told him to let MacArthur's orders stand (holding to his existing positions), until the Tenth Corps was safely

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[235]Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 143. Secretary of Defense Marshall agreed with Truman on the seriousness of conditions. In a speech on December 8 he described the U.S. military situation as "more grave" than it had been in 1942. Payne, Marshall Story, 313-14.

[236]Truman, Memoirs, II, 417.

evacuated from the east coast and a satisfactory cease-fire arrangement had been concluded. Marshall pointed out that present JCS planning called for a gradual retirement southward and asked if the President objected to this. Truman explained that he was only opposed to a hurried withdrawal based on political expediency; the rate of withdrawal should be determined by military considerations alone.[237]

The Tenth Corps' successful evacuation from Hungnam, which Truman described as "the best Christmas present" he could have, began on December 13.[238] The following day the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution creating a three-member group to determine the basis for a satisfactory cease-fire.[239] The United States voted for the resolution. The member states participating in the Unified Command subsequently indicated general agreement on the thirty-eighth parallel as an acceptable cease-fire line. This decision represented a return to the original objective in Korea and a tacit repudiation of the October 7 resolution which sought unification of Korea

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[237] Ibid., 418. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 618; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 92.

[238] File memorandum, December 25, 1950, Truman Papers, OF, 471-B, Truman Library.

[239] Doc. No. 18, General Assembly Resolution, December 14, 1950, United States Policy in the Korean Conflict, 27.

under one government.[240] However, on the seventeenth a Communist Chinese envoy rejected the UN proposal, calling it a "trap" and stated that the conditions for peace were an end to American aggression and complete US withdrawal from Korea.[241]

Truman spent a substantial part of the second week of December working on plans for declaring a state of national emergency. A brief survey of the available presidential powers had been made at the beginning of the Korean fighting. Although the President had available to him a vast range of powers to control the domestic economy and achieve industrial mobilization, most of these legislative grants of authority were contingent upon a declaration of national emergency.[242] The decision to declare such an emergency was discussed by Truman in numerous sessions with White House aides and speechwriters, at a Cabinet meeting on December 8, in two meetings with the National Security Council and in a stormy session with the congressional leadership on Wednesday, December 13. In the latter conference, Republican Senators Taft and

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[240] Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 618.

[241] United States Policy in the Korean Conflict, 52.

[242] New York Times, June 28, 1950. See also ("E.B.S.") to Charles S. Murphy, July 17, 1950, Murphy Papers, White House Files, Presidential Powers folder, Truman Library.

Wherry insisted that Truman had not shown just cause for the proposed proclamation. However, the majority of those present accepted the President's explanation.[243] On the evening of the fourteenth, Truman reviewed an address he planned to deliver the following day. He told his speech-writers they would have to delete a line that read: "Our troops are well able to take care of themselves. . . ." Truman explained that he could not give any such assurance, for he had just heard from Tokyo that Eighth Army's right flank was extremely vulnerable. He hoped that the Tenth Corps, having been evacuated from the east coast, could fill in the gaps and secure the line. The President continued:

> I think if we can pull back a little, to where their supply lines are stretched out, we may hold them a good long time and win out in the end. I've thought so all this week, while everybody has been hollering about a Dunkirk. I'm not giving up, you must understand that. But at this moment I can't honestly give the impression that our soldiers are going to stay right where they are. I don't know that for a fact at this time.[244]

In his message to the nation, the President said that the Chinese intervention had pushed the world to the

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[243] Truman, Memoirs, II, 417-27. See also, Item No. 302, White House Statement Concerning a Meeting with the Congressional Leaders to Discuss the National Emergency, December 13, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 741.

[244] Quoted in John Hersey, "Profiles--Mr. President," Pt. 5, "A Weighing of Words," The New Yorker (May 5, 1951), 39. Hereinafter cited as Hersey, "Profiles," Pt. 5.

brink of general war, with the very future of civilization dependent upon American action. He set "four tasks for national security" in his speech: continued support of the principles of the United Nations; continued cooperation to strengthen collective security; a build-up of the Army, Navy and Air Force and the requisite weaponry; and an expansion of the entire economy, with safeguards against inflationary wage-price spirals. During the course of the speech, Truman indicated he was raising the military manpower level from the existing two and one-half, to three and one-half million personnel. He also raised Selective Service quotas and ordered two additional National Guard divisions to active duty.[245] The formal proclamation establishing a state of national emergency was issued by the White House the following morning.[246] By this action, provisions of some seventy separate legislative acts became operative, significantly increasing the executive

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[245]Item No. 303, Radio and Television Report to the American People on the National Emergency, December 15, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 741-46. Text also appears in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3514-20. An abridged version is in Truman, Memoirs, II, 427-29.

[246]Item No. 304, Presidential Proclamation No. 2914, December 16, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 746-47. Text of this document is reprinted in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3520-21.

authority of the President.[247] In addition, the President asked for, and received, legislation extending and amending title II of the First War Powers Act of 1941, generally concerned withgovernmental contracting powers, which became law on January 12, 1951.[248]

General Walker's Eighth Army had established a continuous defensive line across the Korean peninsula just north of the thirty-eighth parallel. This line was fortified by elements of the evacuated Tenth Corps, now amalgamated into Eighth Army. But this line was thinly spread and could not hold against any serious Chinese pressure. The enemy had broken off pursuit, but intelligence reports indicated they were preparing for an all-out resumption of the offensive on New Year's Day.[249]

The Eighth Army lost its commander in a fatal traffic accident on December 23. MacArthur immediately requested that General Matthew B. Ridgway, then Deputy

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[247] For a full description of the legislative acts placed in force by the national emergency declaration, see J. Howard McGrath to Secretary of the Air Force (Symington), December 18, 1950, RG340, S/AF, 031.1, National Archives.

[248] (64 Stat. 1257). Truman requested this additional grant of power in identical letters, dated December 18, addressed to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House. See Item No. 307, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 749-50.

[249] The Eighth Army line extended from the Imjin River on the west coast, through Yongpyong and Huachon, to Yangyang on the east. Collins, War in Peacetime, 235-36.

Chief of Staff for Operations and Administration, be appointed as Walker's replacement. The President gave his approval, and Ridgway was briefed by MacArthur on the twenty-sixth and warned not to underestimate the ability of his enemy.[250] By the next day Ridgway found himself in full tactical command of an endangered army, far removed from the serene corridors of power in the Pentagon.

With the knowledge that no immediate reinforcements were available for the United Nations Command and a resumption of the massive Chinese Communist assault in the offing, the President's military advisers were increasingly insistent that ways be considered for withdrawing "with honor" from Korea. However, Acheson and the State Department felt the troops should not leave Korea unless they were driven out. "Anything else," as Truman phrased it, "would be an abandonment of the principle that caused us to go in in the first place."[251] This divergence of views caused Truman to summon Generals Bradley and Marshall and Secretary Acheson to Blair House on December 26. The Generals made it clear to the President that they believed a general war was near and that Korea was definitely not the place to fight it. Acheson

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[250]Ridgway, Korean War, 79, 81-83, 100-101; Collins, War in Peacetime, 236-37; MacArthur, Reminiscences, 383; MacArthur testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 150.

[251]Truman, Memoirs, II, 432.

argued that the stakes involved in Korea were so high that the United Nations should fight on until Chinese strength and resolution had been fully tested. Then, Acheson said, if required by "dire military necessity," Korea should be evacuated. The Secretary of State suggested to the President that MacArthur's directives be revised to allow him to inflict maximum attrition against the enemy up to the point where his own force was in danger of destruction. MacArthur should be warned against risking the loss of his command, since upon these forces the ultimate safety of Japan depended. Marshall and Bradley agreed to this, and Truman instructed them to prepare a new directive for his approval.[252]

The Joint Chiefs transmitted the approved directive to the Far East Commander on December 29. Acheson has provided a concise summary of the message:

> 1. If with present UN strength, we could resist at some point in Korea without our incurring serious losses, and if the apparent military and political prestige of Chinese Communists could be deflated,it would be of great importance to our national interests.
> 2. "In the face of increased threat of general war" the Joint Chiefs of Staff would not commit additional U.S. ground forces in Korea. Major war should not be fought in Korea.
> 3. "Therefore . . . your directive now is to defend in successive positions, subject to safety of your troops as your primary consideration, inflicting as much damage to hostile forces in Korea as is possible."

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[252]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 514. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 619.

4. Decision was to be made ahead of time by the Joint Chiefs on the last reasonable opportunity for orderly evacuation, General MacArthur's views were requested on the conditions which should determine evacuation.[253]

The directive reflects a change of policy of considerable magnitude. The objective of Korean unification was not mentioned. The objectives of repelling aggression and restoring peace and security were to be abandoned if unobtainable with the existing force. MacArthur was to take extreme care that his force not be placed in jeopardy, since--the directive emphasized--his primary objective was preservation of the security of Japan, not Korea.[254] The directive asked too much of MacArthur: without any increase in his forces, or lessening of the restrictions upon his operations, he was asked to wage a war of attrition against a superior force without endangering his own troops.

MacArthur's reaction to the December 29 directive was that it indicated to him that the Administration seemed to have lost the will to win in Korea: "President Truman's resolute determination to free and unite that threatened

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[253]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 514, 755. For text of the JCS message to MacArthur, see Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1464, 1618; Pt. 3, 2179-80, 2223-26, 2244-45; MacArthur, Reminiscences, 377-78. See also, Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 138-39.

[254]Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 620.

land had now deteriorated almost into defeatism."[255] MacArthur responded immediately to the JCS directive, saying that the continued restrictions on his air and naval operations deprived him of the available military capacity. The additional potential represented in utilizing Chinese Nationalist troops was also being ignored. If, MacArthur said, the United States were willing to make the "political determination" that a state of war existed because of Communist China's action, four desirable retaliatory measures could be taken: a naval blockade of China; air and naval action to destroy China's military-industrial capacity; procurement of needed reinforcements from Formosa; and an end to restriction on Chinese Nationalist attacks against the China mainland. The bulk of MacArthur's message dealt with the advantages which would ensue from such a course. The general tone of this communication was one of thorough dissatisfaction with the new directive and an urgent repetition of his request that all tactical and political limitations be removed.[256] The resumption of the Chinese offensive on

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[255] MacArthur, Reminiscences, 378.

[256] Ibid., 378-80. For other texts of MacArthur's message of the 30th, see Guttman (ed.), Korea and the Theory of Limited War, 11-12; Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), Truman Administration, 450-52; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 620; Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1465; Pt. 3, 2180-81. See also, Acheson, Present at the Creation, 514-15; Truman, Memoirs, II, 433; Ridgway, Korean War,

the first day of 1951 made an end to this dispute essential.

The renewal of offensive activities on New Year's Day forced the United Nations Command to abandon the South Korean capital of Seoul as they gave ground southward. Meanwhile, Washington considered a reply to MacArthur's message of December 30. At last, on the ninth of January, Truman approved a JCS message to the Far East Commander which informed him that the retaliatory steps he advocated had been given and were continuing to receive thorough consideration. MacArthur was informed that the Administration fully appreciated the difficulties he now faced because of Chinese intervention. However, the JCS message read, reconsideration of existing conditions led to the acceptance of certain new operating assumptions. Among the imperatives now accepted by the Joint Chiefs (and the President) was that conditions outside of Korea did not justify a strengthening of U.S. military forces there. Additionally, the proposed naval blockade and use of Chinese Nationalist troops were viewed with disfavor for diplomatic reasons. As for the bombing of objectives in China, this would only be undertaken in response to a Chinese attack on UN forces outside

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91; Walter Millis, "Truman and MacArthur," in Guttman (ed.), Korea and the Theory of Limited War, 45-46. Hereinafter cited as Millis, "Truman and MacArthur."

Korea.[257] The JCS message concluded by repeating the instructions sent to MacArthur on December 29: "To defend in successive positions, inflicting maximum damage to hostile forces in Korea. . . ," with evacuation to be undertaken if essential to the preservation of his command in order to carry out the primary mission, defense of Japan.[258]

Like MacArthur, President Rhee of South Korea had a plan for turning the tide of the war which he pressed upon Truman during the early days of January. Rhee proposed that the United States underwrite a dramatic increase in the size of the Republic of Korea Army. When queried about this by the JCS, MacArthur replied, on January 6, that given the performance levels of ROK Army units and friendly guerrilla units, the military equipment involved could be put to better use if given to the

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[257] JCS to CINCFE, January 9, 1951, printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 332-33; Pt. 2, 1322. Message also appears in MacArthur, Reminiscences, 380. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 433-34; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 515; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 621; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 141.

[258] JCS to CINCFE, January 9, 1951, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1599-1600. Defense Secretary Marshall testified that MacArthur's proposals would, in his judgment, not have brought a quick decision in Korea, but would have created a hazardous condition, if not world war. See ibid., Pt. 1, 369. For an examination of military and diplomatic objections to MacArthur's specific proposals, see Ridgway, Korean War, 146-48.

newly-formed National Police Reserve of Japan.[259] Rhee persisted, however. In a personal letter to Truman, dated January 10, he told Truman that "even now you can save the situation," by fully arming and equipping a half-million Korean youths. The South Korean President also asked Truman to grant MacArthur the authority to ". . . use any weapons that will check Communist aggression anywhere, even the atom bomb. A few bombs on Moscow alone will shake the Communist world."[260] Truman ignored Rhee's message until February 10, when he sent a noncommittal response written for him by the State Department.[261]

Truman and his military advisers found General MacArthur not as easy to ignore. Irritated by the JCS message of January 9, which he felt left all decisions contingent upon tactical actions initiated by the enemy, MacArthur, "shot a query right back."[262] MacArthur

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[259]JCS to CINCFE, January 4, 1951, copy in Tannenwald Papers, Subject File, Chronology, MacArthur Hearings, Truman Library. See also, CINCFE to Department of the Army (for JCS), January 6, 1951, ibid. See also, Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3530-32; Truman, Memoirs, II, 432-33.

[260]Rhee to Truman, transmitted in letter, John M. Chang to Truman, January 10, 1951, Truman Papers, OF, 471-B - Korean Emergency, Truman Library.

[261]Acheson to the President, February 9, 1951, ibid. See also, Truman to Rhee, February 10, 1951, ibid.

[262]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 380-81.

requested a clarification of his orders, since it was "self-evident" that his command was not of sufficient strength to carry out the twin tasks of holding in Korea and simultaneously protecting Japan from assault. He could hold a "beachhead line" temporarily, but only at great cost. MacArthur reported his troops to be embittered and worn out, with their morale at such an ebb that their battle efficiency would be severely impaired ". . . unless the political basis upon which they are asked to trade life for time is clearly delineated, fully understood, and so impelling that the hazards of battle are accepted cheerfully. . . ."[263] If no such basis existed, MacArthur said his command should be removed from Korea as rapidly as possible. "The issue involves a decision of highest national and international importance. . . .

> Therefore, my query amounts to this: is it the present objective of United States political policy to minimize losses by evacuation as soon as it can be accomplished, or to maintain a military position in Korea--indefinitely, for a limited time?
>
> Under the extraordinary limitations and conditions imposed upon the command in Korea, as I have pointed out, its military position is untenable, but it can hold, if overriding political considerations so

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[263]MacArthur to JCS, January 10, 1951, printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 906.

dictate, for any length of time up to its complete destruction. Your clarification requested.[264]

General MacArthur's message clearly shifted responsibility for any disaster involving Korea or Japan back to Washington, unless the "extraordinary limitations" were lifted. Reaction to the message was strong. Admiral Sherman believed that this message brought about a serious impairment of the normal command relationships between MacArthur and the JCS.[265] Secretary Acheson has written of the January 10 cable: "Nothing further was needed to convince me that the General was incurably recalcitrant and basically disloyal to the purposes of his Commander in Chief."[266] Aware of the gravity of MacArthur's message, Secretary of Defense Marshall brought it to the President soon after receiving it. Truman recalls being "deeply disturbed" by MacArthur's words: "The Far East commander was, in effect, reporting that the course of action decided upon by the National Security Council and by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and approved by me was not feasible."[267]

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[264] Ibid. See also, MacArthur, Reminiscences, 380-81; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 621-22; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 142; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 332.

[265] Sherman testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1600-601.

[266] Acheson, Present at the Creation, 515.

[267] Truman, Memoirs, II, 434.

The President reacted to MacArthur's message by putting the JCS to work studying recourses and ordering a special meeting of the National Security Council to convene on January 12.[268]

The Joint Chiefs drafted a directive for MacArthur, but in consultation with the State Department, a dispute arose over the inclusion of foreign policy matters in a military directive. The disagreement was laid before the President in the NSC meeting of the twelfth. He resolved it by agreeing to write a personal letter to MacArthur regarding the political policy matters the State Department wished to emphasize and he approved the purely military directive which was dispatched immediately.[269] This new directive began with the JCS informing MacArthur that they recognized, based primarily on information he had provided, that it would not be feasible to hold in Korea under extant conditions for any protracted period. However, national interests, the world-wide prestige of the United States, and the future of the UN and NATO organizations rested upon his ability to inflict "maximum practicable punishment" on the aggressors. He was to evacuate only when compelled to do so by military

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[268] Ibid.

[269] Bradley testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 736-37.

considerations.[270] The sense of the message was that MacArthur's orders remained unchanged.

The personal message Truman agreed to send MacArthur on national policy is dated January 13. In part, it reads:

> . . . I wish in this telegram to let you have my views as to our basic national and international purposes in continuing the resistance to aggression in Korea. . . . This present telegram is not to be taken in any sense as a directive. Its purpose is to give you something of what is in our minds regarding the political factors.
>
> 1. A successful resistance in Korea would serve the following important purposes:
>
> (a) To demonstrate that aggression will not be accepted by us or by the United Nations. . . .
>
> (b) To deflate the dangerously exaggerated political and military prestige of Communist China. . . .
>
> (c) To afford more time for and to give direct assistance to the organization of non-Communist resistance in Asia. . . .
>
> (d) To carry out our commitments of honor to the South Koreans. . . .
>
> (e) To make possible a far more satisfactory peace settlement for Japan and to contribute greatly to the post-treaty security position of Japan in relation to the continent.
>
> (f) To lend resolution to many countires not only in Asia but also in Europe and the Middle East . . . to let them know that they need not now rush to come to terms with Communism on whatever terms they can get, meaning complete submission.
>
> (g) To inspire those who may be called upon to fight against great odds if subjected to a sudden onslaught by the Soviet Union or by Communist China.
>
> (h) To lend point and urgency to the rapid build-up of the defenses of the western world.
>
> (i) To bring the United Nations through its first great effort on collective security and to produce a free-world coalition of incalculable value to the national security of the United States.

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[270] JCS to CINCFE, January 12, 1951, printed in ibid., Pt. 2, 737-38, 907, 1414-15. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 623.

(j) To alert the people behind the Iron Curtain that their masters are bent upon wars of aggression and that this crime will be resisted by the free world.

2. Our course of action at this time should be such as to consolidate the great majority of the United Nations. . . . Further, pending the build-up of our national strength, we must act with great prudence in so far as extending the area of hostilities is concerned. Steps which might in themselves be fully justified and which might lend some assistance to the campaign in Korea would not be beneficial if they thereby involved Japan or Western Europe in large-scale hostilities.

3. We recognize, of course, that continued resistance might not be militarily possible with the limited forces with which you are being called upon to meet larger Chinese armies. Further, in the present world situation, your forces must be preserved as an effective instrument for the defense of Japan and elsewhere. However, some of the important purposes mentioned above might be supported, if you should think it practicable, and advisable, by continued resistance from off-shore islands of Korea. . . , if it becomes impracticable to hold an important portion of Korea itself. In the worst case, it would be important that, if we must withdraw from Korea, it be clear to the world that that course is forced upon us by military necessity and that we shall not accept the result politically or militarily until the aggression has been rectified.

4. In reaching a final decision about Korea, I shall have to give constant thought to the main threat from the Soviet Union and to the need for a rapid expansion of our armed forces to meet this great danger.

5. . . . .

6. The entire nation is grateful for your splendid leadership in the difficult struggle in Korea and for the superb performance of your forces under the most difficult curcumstances.[271]

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[271]Truman to MacArthur, January 13, 1951, printed in Truman, Memoirs, II, 435-36. Text of Truman's message also appears in Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 503-505; MacArthur, Reminiscences, 381-82. See also, Collins, War in Peacetime, 250-51; Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, 406-409; Whitney, MacArthur, 436-38; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 97-98.

By any measure, Truman's message was an extraordinary document. Not only was it a uniquely candid communication between the Commander in Chief and a theater commander, but also a concise, thorough delineation of the goals of national military and diplomatic policy. In paragraph (2) of the telegram, the President provided a definition of the new concept of limited warfare by acknowledging that there were militarily-advisable steps which were not being taken because of the danger of precipitating a wider war. MacArthur's reaction on receipt of the message was to inform his staff that the question of evacuation was settled; there would be none.[272] After MacArthur's recall, his spokesman, General Whitney maintained that Truman's cable was the first clear statement the Far East command received indicating that the Administration desired to hold in Korea.[273] Truman chose not to comment on this interpretation in his memoirs. After quoting from his message, he said its purpose was to get General MacArthur to accept, ". . . as a soldier should, the political decisions which the civil authorities of the government had determined upon."[274]

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[272]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 382.

[273]Washington Post, May 11, 1951; Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 976-79, 1638-39; Pt. 3, 2208; Pt. 4, 3186-87; Whitney, MacArthur, 436-39.

[274]Truman, Memoirs, II, 436.

MacArthur's message of January 10 generated feverish activity in the Washington hierarchy. The special session of the National Security Council, the JCS directive, and Truman's telegram have already been noted. Two other developments can also be attributed to MacArthur's message: first, a study proposing numerous courses of action received "tentative approval" by the JCS and was submitted by Marshall to the Security Council for initial consideration on the twelfth.[275] Secondly, in the NSC session, Truman approved a recommendation that two members of the Joint Chiefs--Collins and Vandenberg--be sent immediately to Japan and Korea for a fresh evaluation of the military situation.[276]

The study tentatively accepted by the JCS was prepared by its own Joint Staff. It contained sixteen courses of action which might be undertaken in the Far East in the event the United Nations force had to evacuate Korea and a full-scale war with China developed. The proposals were military, economic and diplomatic in nature and included the four retaliatory measures against China which MacArthur had recommended on several

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[275]Marshall testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 324, 335-36, 703.

[276]Ibid., 324; Bradley testimony, ibid., Pt. 2, 907.

occasions.[277] On January 12 the NSC deferred discussion of the Joint Chiefs' study until their next scheduled session five days later. By that time their appreciation of the military situation had improved to the point where active consideration of the document was halted. Thus, while several of the proposed actions were later instituted, in whole or part, the full study was never implemented as a national policy directive.[278]

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[277]MacArthur's four proposals, as stated in his message of December 30 to the JCS called for: (1) air and naval attacks against Chinese military bases and industrial plants; (2) naval blockade of Chinese coastline; (3) accept Nationalist Chinese volunteers; (4) allow Formosa to attack mainland China. See MacArthur, Reminiscences, 378-80; MacArthur testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 13-16. Some of the other proposed courses of action remain classified, but several have become public record through congressional testimony. Among them are: (1) continue the bombing of military targets in Korea; (2) send a military training mission and increase MDAP aid to Formosa; (3) remove restrictions on air reconnaissance of China's coastal areas and of Manchuria; (4) continue and intensify economic blockade of trade with China; (5) stabilize military positions in Korea or evacuate to Japan; (6) press for the UN to brand Communist China as an aggressor. MacArthur's suggested air and naval attacks on China, while included in the sixteen proposals, were made contingent upon China attacking American forces someplace other than Korea. Marshall testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 333-34, 340. As for (6) above, on February 1, 1951, the General Assembly passed a resolution denouncing the People's Republic of China as an aggressor in Korea. Doc. No. 28, United States Policy in the Korean Conflict, 37.

[278]Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 329, 335-36, 505-506; Pt. 2, 736-37, 1321-22, 1531-33; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 516.

MacArthur had been briefed on the JCS study in a meeting with Generals Collins and Vandenberg, who had just arrived from Washington on January 15 (Tokyo time). They also discussed the Joint Chiefs' directive and the President's telegram to MacArthur.[279] Soon afterward, the two members of the JCS left for an extensive study of the Korean battlefields. Collins already knew, from private communication with General Ridgway, that the Eighth Army leader was far more confident than MacArthur that his forces could not be driven from the peninsula.[280] In his talks with Ridgway and numerous other commanders in Korea, the Army Chief of Staff's belief that they could hold and fight effectively was confirmed. In a message radioed to Bradley on the seventeenth and a subsequent meeting with Truman following his return to Washington, Collins said that the Eighth Army was in "good shape" and that the morale of the troops was "very satisfactory" under the circumstances. The Chinese were having severe logistical difficulties and had made no serious efforts to advance beyond the Han River (just south of Seoul). Collins remembers that the President and his advisers were

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[279]Collins testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1210-11, 1227-28; Vandenberg testimony, ibid., 1472-73. For an account of the conference, see Collins, War in Peacetime, 254-55.

[280]Collins, War in Peacetime, 251-52. See also, American Military History, 561.

"reassured" by the reports that he and Vandenberg brought back from Korea: ". . . though it was realized that rough times were still ahead of us, no longer was there much talk of evacuation. General Ridgway alone was responsible for this dramatic change."[281]

By the third week of January it was evident that the Communist offensive had halted at a point just above the 37th parallel. Apparently the enemy could not sustain the offensive because of over-extended lines of communication and supply. Their logistical problems were made more difficult by persistent aerial interdiction. The bulk of the enemy force was withdrawn northward from the line of contact. Sensing this development, Ridgway sent out reinforced probes which encountered only thin screening forces. Accordingly, ridgway began to move cautiously to the offensive with reconnaissances-in-force in various sectors along the battle-line. Meeting with success, on January 25, Ridgway ordered the western flank of his Eighth Army, the First and Ninth Corps, on a general sweep forward (Operation Thunderbolt). January ended with these forces encountering their first really

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[281]Collins, War in Peacetime, 253-55; Truman, Memoirs, II, 436-37. See also, Marshall testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 324, 332; Collins testimony, ibid., Pt. 2, 1211; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 516; American Military History, 562; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 98.

stiff resistance from a Communist delaying action near the outskirts of Seoul.[282]

Stalled on the western flank, on February 5 Ridgway ordered the American Tenth and ROK Third Corps to advance in hope of reducing the deep salient in the central sector of his front line. This advance met strong opposition and a concentrated counterattack launched on February 11. The center sagged, but reinforced by all available reserves, held, and the advance recommenced ten days later, eliminating the salient. On the western front, to avoid being flanked, the enemy withdrew all forces below Seoul on February 9, enabling UN forces to recapture Inchon and Kimpo airfield the next day. The combined Chinese and North Korean force mounted a stubborn defense in the capital city of South Korea and held it until mid-March. Ridgway, who was more concerned with destroying the enemy and maintaining the integrity of his line than with the acquisition of places, did not press an attack against Seoul. By the end of February, 1951, the UN forces occupied a line just south of Seoul, running from Inchon in the west to Kangnung in the east, having advanced roughly half the distance between the thirty-seventh and

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[282]Esposito (ed.), West Point Atlas, II, Sec. 3, Map Plate No. 11; Collins, War in Peacetime, 257-58; Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 12-13. See also, MacArthur, Reminiscences, 383-84; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 337; American Military History, 561-62.

thirty-eighth parallels.[283]

While it is reasonable to conclude that the Administration had by now given up any thought of reconquering North Korea, since that would entail a ground war against the almost limitless manpower reserves of China, MacArthur was still actively devising such a campaign. In long-range plans developed in February, MacArthur intended to first regain the Seoul line as a base of operations. He would then destroy the enemy's rear by massive air strikes along the top of North Korea. If still not permitted to bomb enemy reinforcements in Manchuria, as he anticipated, MacArthur planned to lay vast fields of radioactive atomic wastes across all major enemy supply lines in North Korea. Let the General describe his master stroke:

> . . . then, reinforced by Nationalist Chinese troops, if I were permitted to use them, and with American reinforcements on the way, I would make simultaneous amphibious and airborne landings at the upper end of both coasts of North Korea, and close a gigantic trap. . . . It would be something like Inchon, but on a much larger scale.[284]

On March 7 General Ridgway began a new offensive push (Operation Ripper), its objectives being the destruction of enemy forces and the attainment of a new

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[283]Collins, War in Peacetime, 258-62; Ridgway, Korean War, 107-112. See also, Esposito (ed.), West Point Atlas, II, Sec. 3, Map Plate No. 11; American Military History, 562.

[284]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 384-85. See also, Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 198.

front line, code-named "Idaho," located just south of the thirty-eighth parallel. As this movement advanced, it resulted in the bracketing of Seoul, leaving the enemy defenders in an untenable position. Without opposition, the Eighth Army recaptured the capital on the morning of March 15.[285] Korean President Rhee wrote to Truman expressing gratitude for the return of Seoul. In the same letter Rhee urged the President not to listen to the "pro-Communist appeasers" who were urging him to stop at the thirty-eighth parallel and seek a cease-fire. He repeated his request that the United States immediately provide arms and equipment for over a quarter-million Korean youths who would be of material assistance in driving the Chinese Communists back into Manchuria to stay.[286] By the final week in March Ridgway's forces were at the thirty-eighth parallel, and he proposed to advance and stabilize his position at a line (coded "Kansas") slightly above the parallel. The Eighth Army commander was instructed to hold below the line pending an attempt by the Administration to negotiate a settlement.[287]

Truman's advisers in the State and Defense

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[285]Ridgway, Korean War, 113.

[286]Rhee to the President, March 26, 1951, Truman Papers, OF, 471, Truman Library.

[287]Collins, War in Peacetime, 262; Ridgway, Korean War, 113-16.

Departments had been meeting continuously, since Ridgway's success in January indicated to them the need to prepare new policy recommendations for the President. From the viewpoint of the State Department in early February, five possible courses of action existed: abandoning Korea; unifying the entire peninsula by force; extending the war into China; enduring an indefinite stalemate at the current positions; and trying for a negotiated settlement.[288] The planners were at loggerheads; State Department was reluctant to state political objectives until the Eighth Army's military capabilities were clearly established and the JCS insisted political goals had to be set before military recommendations could be made.[289] At the same time it appeared that the majority of UN member nations, including those engaged in Korea, were against any "general advance" across the parallel.[290]

On February 23 Secretary Marshall received from Acheson a draft memorandum which the Secretary of State suggested they send as a joint statement to the President. The memorandum cautioned against any general allied advance beyond the thirty-eighth parallel, but recognized

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[288] Collins, War in Peacetime, 263.

[289] Ibid., 263-64.

[290] Ibid., 264.

that MacArthur should feel free to continue air and naval operations along with any necessary, limited ground action north of that line.[291] Marshall referred Acheson's note to the JCS and the three service Secretaries.[292] The latter group responded in agreement with Acheson's memorandum that the UN resolution allowing advances north of the thirty-eighth parallel was "permissive not mandatory." They further agreed that the UN forces should not make a general advance beyond the parallel except for tactical reasons to acquire favorable defensive terrain. Army Secretary Pace and Air Secretary Finletter also agreed that this policy should be made a matter of public record. On this last, Acting Secretary of the Navy Daniel A. Kimball demurred, believing it would "hamper effective military action."[293]

The Joint Chiefs of Staff reported to Marshall their direct disagreement with the service Secretaries and

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[291] Ibid.

[292] General Collins felt Marshall should not have consulted the service Secretaries: "So far as I know, this was the first time that a question of major military significance was referred to the service Secretaries for comment. It would have been unfortunate if they had been consulted regularly on such matters, because this would have tended to interpose them between the JCS and the Secretary of Defense, which was not contemplated by the National Defense Act of 1947, as amended in 1949." See ibid., footnote, 265.

[293] Pace, Kimball and Finletter to Marshall, February 24, 1951, RG330, OSD, CD 092 (Korea), National Archives.

Acheson's draft memorandum for the President. They argued that since there had been no change in the stated political objectives of the United Nations or the United States, no political reason existed for halting military operations beyond the parallel. MacArthur needed freedom of maneuver to keep the enemy off balance and ensure the safety of his own forces. The JCS urged that until such time as a new political objective was formulated, MacArthur's directive remain unchanged.[294] Backed by these opinions, Marshall told Acheson he would not sign the memorandum to Truman. The Defense Secretary joined the JCS in emphasizing the necessity for a definitive statement on political objectives in Korea. The President did not see the memorandum in question, since State and Defense were so far apart on its terms.[295] Clearly, however, there existed a tacit understanding that the nation must return to its original political objective of preserving South Korea. Except for General MacArthur and President Rhee, no one seriously proposed the reconquest of North Korea.

It was the success of General Ridgway's forces in

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[294]Collins, War in Peacetime, 265-66. The reasoning of the Joint Chiefs can be seen in General James H. Burns' commentary to Deputy Secretary of Defense Lovett on the State Department draft memorandum, February 26, 1951, RG330, OSD, CD 092 (Korea), National Archives.

[295]Collins, War in Peacetime, 266.

March that forced the Truman administration to a decision. By mid-March the State and Defense departments, as well as the National Security Council, were in substantial agreement that the time was opportune to seek a ceasefire, looking toward a negotiated peace settlement. It was felt that the President, acting as executor for the United Nations, should initiate such an approach by a public appeal to the Communists. Truman agreed:

> . . . in the first place, since we had been able to inflict heavy casualties on the Chinese and were pushing them back to and beyond the 38th parallel, it would now be in their interest at least as much as ours to halt the fighting, and secondly, the invaders stood substantially ejected from the territory of the Republic of Korea.[296]

The draft of a statement was prepared for the President by the State Department and agreed to by all the principals on March 19. On the following day a message to MacArthur requested his recommendations:

> State planning a Presidential announcement shortly that with clearing of bulk of South Korea of aggressors, United Nations now prepared to discuss conditions of settlement in Korea. United Nations feeling exists that further diplomatic efforts toward settlement should be made before any advance with major forces north of the thirty-eighth parallel. . . .
> Recognizing that the parallel has no military significance, State has asked Joint Chiefs of Staff what authority you should have to permit sufficient freedom of action for next few weeks to proved security for United Nations forces and maintain

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[296]Truman, Memoirs, II, 438. See also, Collins, War in Peacetime, 266-67; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 337.

contact with the enemy. Your recommendations desired.[297]

MacArthur responded on March 21, telling the JCS that his existing directive was adequate and requesting that ". . . no further restrictions be imposed upon the United Nations Command in Korea."[298] Also, MacArthur granted final approval to Ridgway's proposed "Operation Rugged," which would carry UN forces slightly above the thirty-eighth parallel. This was entirely proper for MacArthur to do, for without new instructions from Washington, crossing the line into North Korea was simply a tactical decision.[299] However, Truman did not consider MacArthur's next action to be entirely proper at all.

On March 24 (Tokyo time), MacArthur issued a communiqué which he described as "routine" and Secretary

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[297]JCS to CINCFE, March 20, 1951, printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 343, 346; Pt. 5, 3180, 3541. Text also appears in MacArthur, Reminiscences, 386-87; Truman, Memoirs, II, 438-39; Collins, War in Peacetime, 267; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 627; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 107. For discussion of this document during the investigation of MacArthur's recall, see Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1007-1008, 1021-23, 1142-43; Pt. 3, 1915-16, 2184.

[298]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 387. See also, Collins, War in Peacetime, 267; Truman, Memoirs, II, 439; Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 346; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 199.

[299]Ridgway, Korean War, 116. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 629. On March 28, the Secretary of Defense announced that crossing of the thirty-eighth parallel was only a tactical decision. Truman confirmed this in a press conference on the twenty-ninth. See Item No. 63, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1951, 203, 205-206.

Acheson described as ". . . defiance of the Chiefs of Staff, sabotage of an operation of which he had been informed, and insubordination of the grossest sort to his Commander in Chief."[300] In this controversial document MacArthur dwelt at length on the military weaknesses demonstrated in the fighting by the Chinese and on the success of his forces in spite of the inhibitions placed on their activity. The enemy should be aware, MacArthur said, that if the United Nations were to drop its "tolerant" efforts at keeping the war limited and allow operations against China, that nation risked total military collapse. Although the fundamental questions at issue in Korea were political and subject only to diplomatic solutions, MacArthur announced his willingness to negotiate with the enemy commander in chief with a view to finding military means for achieving the political objectives of the United Nations in Korea.[301]

The President called a meeting the following morning (March 24, Washington time) to discuss MacArthur's communiqué. In attendance were Acheson and Rusk from

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[300]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 387; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 519.

[301]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 387-88. Text of MacArthur's communiqué is reprinted in Truman, Memoirs, II, 440-41; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 108-110; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 628; Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, 412-13.

State and Lovett and all the Chiefs of Staff. At the time, the process of clearing the proposed presidential statement with the thirteen nations having forces in Korea was just being completed.[302] Nevertheless, Truman ordered the cancellation of his message, which would have proposed a cease-fire, to be followed by mutual withdrawal, leaving to the United Nations the final solution of the Korean question.[303] Truman later wrote that what was more important than the cancellation of his message and the furor among the allies was that ". . . once again General MacArthur had openly defied the policy of his Commander in Chief, the President of the United States."[304] After ascertaining that everyone present agreed that his order of December 6, 1950, regarding the clearance of all public statements was at issue, Truman personally dictated an order to MacArthur:

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[302]Marshall testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 344, 346; Bradley testimony, ibid., Pt. 2,899.

[303]Text of proposed statement is in Truman, Memoirs, II, 439-40. While Truman's statement gives lip-service to the objective of a unified Korea, the principle expressed throughout was really status quo ante bellum. See Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 628.

[304]Truman, Memoirs, II, 442. I. F. Stone believes Truman was relieved by MacArthur's communiqué, for it gave him an excuse not to issue the statement he was reluctant to make. Hidden History of the Korean War, 270.

> The President has directed that your attention be called to his order as transmitted 6 December, 1950. In view of the information given you 20 March, 1951 any further statements by you must be coordinated as prescribed in the order of 6 December.
>
> The President has also directed that in the event Communist military leaders request an armistice in the field, you immediately report that fact to the JCS for instructions.[305]

Truman has stated--after the fact--that he had decided to relieve General MacArthur of command upon receipt of the March 24 communiqué, which the President regarded as extreme insubordination.[306] However, another indiscreet statement by MacArthur two weeks later occurred before Truman acted. The final incident which may have confirmed the President in his resolve concerned an exchange of letters between MacArthur and Representative Joseph W. Martin, Jr., leader of the Republican minority in the House. Early in March Martin wrote to the General solciting his views on Far Eastern policy and strategy. In a reply dated March 20 MacArthur said he favored the conventional military approach of "meeting force with maximum counter-force." He also said Martin's suggestion that the Nationalists on Formosa be allowed to open a second front in Asia was consistent with logic and

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[305]JCS to CINCFE, March 24, 1951, printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 407; Pt. 5, 3181-82, 3542; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 519; Truman, Memoirs, II, 443.

[306]Truman, Memoirs, II, 442, 444-45, 448.

tradition. The letter concluded:

> It seems strangely difficult for some to realize that here in Asia is where the Communist conspirators have elected to make their play for global conquest . . . here we fight Europe's war with arms while the diplomats there still fight it with words. . . . As you point out, we must win. There is no substitute for victory.307

Without first obtaining MacArthur's approval, Congressman Martin read the letter from the floor of the House on April 5. A series of meetings began between Truman and various officials of the State and Defense departments the following day. The culminating session came on Monday morning, April 9, with Marshall, Acheson, Harriman and Bradley present, the latter reporting that the Joint Chiefs were unanimous in recommending the immediate relief of General MacArthur from command. All present concurred, including Truman, who revealed for the first time that he had arrived at this decision following MacArthur's statement of March 24.[308] The President directed Bradley to prepare the order which was transmitted April 11 (Washington time):

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[307]Quoted in Truman, Memoirs, II, 445-46. See also, Collins, War in Peacetime, 281; Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 412; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 519-20; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 112-14; Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, 415-16.

[308]Truman, Memoirs, II, 445-48. See also, Collins, War in Peacetime, 283; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 117-18.

> I deeply regret that it becomes my duty as President and Commander in Chief of the United States military forces to replace you as Supreme Commander, Allied Powers; Commander in Chief, United Nations Command; Commander in Chief, Far East; and Commanding General, U.S. Army, Far East.[309]

The President appointed Lieutenant General Matthew B. Ridgway to MacArthur's commands.[310] Shortly thereafter, on the recommendation of Secretaries Pace and Marshall, Truman approved Ridgway's elevation to the rank of General.[311] Lieutenant General James A. Van Fleet was ordered from the United States to take command of the Eighth Army.[312] Ridgway recalls that upon taking over his new command he was determined not to exercise the tight tactical control which MacArthur had exercised but to allow Van Fleet the latitude necessary to field command. When he took command, Ridgway says, "clear policy decisions" had been communicated to him by Truman and the Joint Chiefs, ". . . the most immediate of which was to avoid any action that might result in an extension of

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[309]Item No. 77, Order by the President to General MacArthur, April 11, 1951, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1951, 222. The dismissal of General MacArthur is the subject of the following chapter.

[310]Marshall to Ridgway, April 11, 1951, Truman Papers, OF, 584, Dismissal, Truman Library.

[311]Pace to the President, May 8, 1951, Truman Papers, OF, 1285-B, Truman Library.

[312]Pace to the President, May 21, 1951, ibid.

hostilities and thus lead to a worldwide conflagration."[313]

By mid-April, as the change of commanders took place, UN forces had generally secured the "Kansas" line, a front about six to eight miles above the thirty-eighth parallel. On April 22, twenty-one Chinese and nine North Korean divisions began a massive counter-offensive along the entire front, but with major stress against the western flank, aiming at a recapture of Seoul. The Eighth Army was compelled to give ground, but did so in good order, moving to successive delaying positions in pre-established defensive fortifications. Van Fleet was thus able to contain the attack a few miles above Seoul. The fighting ended five days later with the enemy's withdrawal northward. The Communist forces resumed their offensive on May 16, this time against the eastern flank, where they gained some thirty miles before being halted. The "human wave" assault tactics of these two offensives had cost the enemy an estimated 200,000 casualties, or roughly one-third of the total Communist strength in Korea.[314] Once the Communist offensive had been blunted, Van Fleet's forces had little trouble driving them back until, by mid-June they reoccupied the Kansas line. Since

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[313]Ridgway, Korean War, 162, 169.

[314]Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 629; American Military History, 564-65; Esposito (ed.), West Point Atlas, II, Sec. 3, Map Plate No. 13, 14.

no enthusiasm existed for advancing to the Yalu, either in Washington or the allied capitals, Van Fleet ordered his corps commanders to fortify the Kansas line in depth. This was accomplished by construction of log-and-sandbag bunkers connected by deep, narrow trenches across the entire line of the peninsula, quite reminiscent of World War I entrenchments. The fluid phase of the Korean War had ended. From June 1951 until the final settlement in 1953, military activity consisted mainly of constant patrolling and small, localized clashes.[315]

The character of the Korean War was altered by a pivotal meeting of the National Security Council on May 16, 1951. It was the conclusion of this body--subsequently approved by Truman--that a distinction must henceforth be made between military and political objectives in Korea. The political aim would remain the same, establishment of a unified, democratic, independent Korean state. However, the military objective was now a repulse of the invaders and an end to the fighting through an armistice agreement. Following such a cease-fire, American purpose would be the securing of autonomy for the Republic of Korea south of a line not substantially below the thirty-eighth parallel, mutual withdrawal of

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[315]Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 73-75; American Military History, 310-11.

non-Korean forces, and a buildup of ROK forces to a point where they would constitute an effective deterrent to renewed aggression.[316]

Trygve Lie, UN Secretary-General, announced on June 1 that a cease-fire established in the proximity of the thirty-eighth parallel would accomplish the objectives of the United Nations in Korea. Speaking on the seventh, Acheson took the same position.[317] Two days earlier, George F. Kennan, on leave from the Department but acting as Acheson's agent, had an "unofficial" conversation with Jacob Malik, chief Soviet delegate to the United Nations. Kennan learned that the Soviet Union desired a peaceful and rapid solution in Korea.[318] On June 23, speaking on a UN radio program in New York, Malik said that his nation believed that it was time for the belligerents in Korea to discuss peace. The Peking People's Daily, a semi-official organ of the Chinese government, endorsed Malik's statement two days later.[319] Grasping at this slender

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[316]Truman wrote that this policy "represented no change," when, in fact, it was a return to the original objective of American involvement. Truman, Memoirs, II, 455-56. See also, Acheson, Present at the Creation, 529.

[317]Truman, Memoirs, II, 455-56. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 630.

[318]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 532-33.

[319]Truman, Memoirs, II, 456; Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 15.

straw, on June 29 Truman ordered the following message transmitted to Ridgway:

> The President has directed that 0800 Saturday Tokyo Daylight Saving Time you send following message by radio in clear addressed to Commander in Chief Communist Forces in Korea and simultaneously release to press:
> "As Commander in Chief of the United Nations Command I have been instructed to communicate to you the following:
> "I am informed that you may wish a meeting to discuss an armistice providing for the cessation of hostilities and all acts of armed force in Korea, with adequate guarantees for the maintenance of such armistice. . . ."[320]

A favorable response to this message was received from the Communist commander on the first day of July. He suggested that the meeting place be the town of Kaesong, a site between the lines, quite near the thirty-eighth parallel. The first plenary session of the truce talks was held on July 10, 1951, with hostilities to continue until an armistice was agreed upon. It would take another 158 such sessions, stretched out over more than two years of bitter disputation before the fighting was at last stopped.[321] Throughout it all, until the end of his term

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[320] JCS to Ridgway, June 29, 1951, quoted in Truman, Memoirs, II, 458. For text of the directive to Ridgway communicating acceptable terms, see ibid., 458-59. See also, Millis, Arms and Men, 300; Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 16-17.

[321] Truman, Memoirs, II, 459; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 534-35; Fehrenbach, This Kind of War, 499. See also, Steinberg, Man from Missouri, 400; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 630; Stone, Hidden History of the Korean War, 284-85.

of office, Truman maintained an active supervision of the limited military operations and of the frustrating efforts to obtain a satisfactory cease-fire. Now, along with the daily battlefield reports he also received a daily account of the truce proceedings. As he recalled: "No major steps were taken without specific approval of the President, even to the wording of announcements made by the Far East commander or the chief negotiator at crucial points."[322] The fact is that there was little need for Truman to exercise his powers as Commander in Chief following the removal of MacArthur and the decision to halt and seek a settlement near the thirty-eighth parallel. While he continued to act as an overseer and exercise final authority, the decreased level of combat and smooth functioning of his subordinates sharply diminished his active participation in the conduct of the war. Truman now lost his trusted Secretary of Defense, General Marshall, who retired for personal reasons in September, 1951, but was quite pleased with Marshall's successor, Robert A. Lovett.[323] In May 1952 Eisenhower resigned as Supreme Allied Commander in Europe in order to seek the Republican presidential nomination. Truman ordered General Ridgway

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[322]Truman, Memoirs, II, 459.

[323]Marshall to the President, September 1, 1951, and reply, September 11, 1951, Truman Papers, OF, 1285, Truman Library.

to assume the NATO command, which is some indication of the declining importance to the President of the limited military activity in Korea. General Mark W. Clark served as Ridgway's successor in the Far East command.[324]

The policy adopted for military operations in Korea in mid-1951 was held relatively constant by the President until the end of his term in January, 1953, his adherence to this policy being reinforced by a recommendation of the National Security Council in December, 1951.[325] The President did not "shortchange" the troops serving in Korea, for he insisted that the "overriding priority" on all military end items was to be accorded to combat consumption requirements.[326] However, Truman also kept the troop levels in Korea substantially unchanged for the remainder of his Presidency.[327] This assured a battlefield stalemate and may well have contributed to the protracted truce negotiations.

In June 1952 a public opinion poll revealed that

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[324]Truman, Memoirs, II, 462. See also, American Military History, 567; Mark W. Clark, From the Danube to the Yalu (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), 30. Hereinafter cited as Clark, From the Danube to the Yalu.

[325]Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 130.

[326]Truman to Lovett, January 9, 1952, RG330, OSD, CD 091.3, National Archives.

[327]Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 331.

forty-three percent of those surveyed believed that the United States should have been bolder in Korea, ". . . even at the risk of starting World War III."[328] Asked what policy should now be adopted to Korea, a majority (fifty-three percent) said that the United States should ". . . stop fooling around and do whatever is necessary to knock the Communists out of Korea once and for all."[329] But the President was convinced that his course was the only proper one. In a meeting with the JCS and Secretary of Defense on September 15, 1952, Truman did authorize a very limited increase in military pressure in hope of forcing a more conciliatory attitude out of the Communist truce negotiators. But he told his advisers that he could envision no genuine prospect for any armistice other than by persisting with the established course of action.[330]

The campaign to select Truman's successor was heating up in September, as were the Republican condemnations of his strategy in the Korean War. While an armistice at the time would have been of inestimable value

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[328]Twenty-three percent felt the U.S. should have stayed out and let the Communists take Korea. Only nineteen percent endorsed the policies that had been pursued by the Administration. Roper, You and Your Leaders, 163-64.

[329]To this question, only twenty-two percent believed that the existing strategy should be pursued. See ibid.

[330]Memorandum for the record, Robert A. Lovett, September 15, 1952, USA, Office of the Chief of Staff, 091-Korea, National Archives.

to his party and a desirable climax to his Presidency, Truman refused to allow personal or political considerations to influence his position on a negotiated settlement. His determination is revealed in the excerpts below, taken from the transcript of a meeting in the White House with his principal advisers on September 24:

> The President stated that as he saw the situation we were faced with the question of whether "we should do anything in the world to get an armistice in Korea." He said that he was not willing to get an armistice just for the sake of an armistice, and particularly one which would leave the Communist Chinese in a position to renew hostilities. . . .
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> He added that we must maintain the morale of our forces at home and abroad and strive to handle the worldwide situation in a way to prevent war. He said that he had been conducting his administration for seven years in an effort to avoid World War III and he did not want to wind up his political career by bringing war on. Nevertheless, he would not weaken on the principles that we are striving to maintain. . . .[331]

The Communists, finding the American peace offer of September unacceptable, broke off negotiations in October 1952. On the twenty-fourth of the month, the Republican nominee, General Eisenhower, made a major campaign address at Detroit in which he bitterly denounced the Korean policies of his former Commander in Chief. He said that Korea and the twenty thousand Americans who had died there were ". . . a measure--a damning measure--of the quality

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[331]Transcript of White House meeting, September 24, 1952, ibid.

of leadership we have been given."[332] Eisenhower said that the Korean War was a direct result of Acheson's "perimeter" speech. If elected, he would not be diverted by political considerations (the implication being that Truman had), but would go personally to Korea to determine how best to bring about an honorable settlement.[333] In earlier speeches Eisenhower had given some indication that he would make Korea a major issue. Truman had written to him on August 13, inviting him to attend Cabinet meetings and receive full briefings from the White House staff. He also told the Republican candidate that he had arranged for the CIA to provide him and his Democratic opponent, Adlai Stevenson, with weekly intelligence summaries on the world situation.[334] Replying the next day, Eisenhower declined the invitation so as to remain free to "analyze publicly" the present administration. While welcoming the weekly CIA reports, Eisenhower

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[332] New York Times, October 25, 1952.

[333] Ibid. In a press conference on December 11, 1952, Truman described Eisenhower's announcement that he would go to Korea as "a piece of demagoguery" which Eisenhower was obligated to carry through on after the election. Item No. 345, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1952-53, 1075. Truman repeated the charge of demagoguery against Eisenhower in interviews held late in December. See Anthony Leviero, New York Times, December 27, 1952; Edward T. Polliard, Washington Post, December 27, 1952.

[334] Truman to Eisenhower, August 13, 1952, printed in Truman, Memoirs, II, 512.

cautioned that he would not consider them a restriction on his freedom to discuss foreign policy.[335] Truman admitted that the response made him angry. In a personal note he told Eisenhower that he was very sorry that the latter had allowed "a bunch of screwballs" to come between them. His closing sentence reads: "From a man who has always been your friend and who always intended to be!"[336]

The presidential campaign of 1952 must have been doubly disappointing to Truman. Not only because the result could be interpreted as a repudiation of his Korean policies, but also because Eisenhower, whom he greatly respected and admired and counted as a friend, chose unfairly (in Truman's view) to attack Administration policy. In the years between World War II and the 1952 campaign, the President had given every indication of his great faith in the general. In 1946 he had appointed Eisenhower to the permanent rank of General of the Army for life.[337] As previously recorded, Truman subsequently made Eisenhower Chief of Staff of the Army, later Chairman of the

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[335]Eisenhower to Truman, August 14, 1952, ibid., 512-13.

[336]Truman to Eisenhower, August 16, 1952, ibid., 513.

[337]Truman to Patterson, August 2, 1946, OSW (211), AG031.1, National Archives. See also, Patterson to Eisenhower, August 23, 1946, Eisenhower Papers, PF/DDE, Patterson folder, Eisenhower Library.

Joint Chiefs and, finally, NATO Supreme Commander. Their correspondence throughout these years is replete with mutual assurances of respect and loyalty. Eisenhower, for example, wrote early in 1948 of the "high sense of distinction and privilege" he felt for the opportunity to serve under Truman and his gratitude for the President's understanding, encouragement and friendship.[338] Resigning from the chairmanship of the JCS in 1949, the general assured Truman that it had been ". . . a great honor and privilege to do what I could . . . under your direction as Commander-in-Chief."[339] When Eisenhower resigned as Army Chief of Staff in January 1948, Truman told him: "You have my heartiest good wishes in whatever you may decide to do--and my friendship and admiration always."[340] There was a short-lived attempt to obtain the Democratic nomination for Eisenhower in 1948 which he helped to kill himself. Writing to him after the election, Truman told Eisenhower that it had been unnecessary to reaffirm his loyalty to the President: "I always know exactly where you stand."[341]

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[338]Eisenhower to Truman, January 22, 1948, Eisenhower Papers, PF/DDE, Truman folder (1), Eisenhower Library.

[339]Eisenhower to Truman, August 17, 1949, ibid.

[340]Truman to Eisenhower, January 23, 1948, ibid.

[341]Truman to Eisenhower, November 16, 1948, ibid.

Despite his personal pique at Eisenhower, Truman sent him a message of congratulations immediately after the election and offered the use of the presidential aircraft should he still desire to go to Korea.[342] This was the first of a series of messages exchanged between the two men in the next few days, in all of which Truman emphasized his strong desire to keep the President-Elect abreast of the international scene as well as to bring about as effortless a change of administrations as possible.[343] Truman's sincerity in this was displayed in a letter he addressed to all of the principal officers of his Administration in December, asking their full cooperation in facilitating an orderly transition. He required that each of them report to him on the steps taken in his respective enclave to bring this about.[344] In compliance with this request, Secretary Lovett reported that the Defense Department had provided General Eisenhower with transportation, accommodations and military intelligence

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[342]Truman to Eisenhower, November 5, 1952, quoted in Truman, Memoirs, II, 505. See also, Item No. 325, Statement by the President on the Election of Dwight D. Eisenhower, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1952-53, 1028.

[343]These several communications are all published in Truman, Memoirs, II, 505-510. See also, Corwin and Koenig, Presidency Today, 128-29.

[344]Truman to Secretary of State, et. al., December 31, 1952, Truman Papers, Murphy Files, Correspondence and General File, Truman Library.

on his trip to Korea, accompanied throughout by Omar Bradley, the JCS Chairman. Eisenhower, as well as the men he designated as appointees to the various posts in the departments, was being fully briefed and constantly acquainted with the military and administrative information necessary for the conduct of office.[345]

Truman's efforts resulted in a governmental change-over brought about with minimal friction or disruption. However, he had little faith in his successor's ability to govern. MacArthur has recorded that while he and the President were talking privately at Wake Island, the conversation got around to politics. Truman renarked that while he liked the general personally, "Eisenhower doesn't know the first thing about politics. Why, if he should become President, his Administration would make Grant's look like a model of perfection."[346] In his own memoirs, Truman said he agreed with the observation of Sam Rayburn, powerful House Democrat, who, when asked to comment on the possibility of General Eisenhower running for the presidency said: "No, won't do. Good man, but wrong business."[347] Contemplating the possibility of an

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[345]Lovett to the President, January 3, 1953, RG330, OSD, 031.1, National Archives.

[346]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 363; Whitney, MacArthur, 389.

[347]Truman, Memoirs, II, 187.

Eisenhower victory in the summer of 1952, Truman reportedly commented: "He'll sit here and he'll say, 'Do this! Do that!' And nothing will happen. Poor Ike--it won't be a bit like the Army. He'll find it very frustrating."[348]

Certainly Truman found his own last months in office very frustrating. He relinquished national leadership on January 20, 1953, and left Washington for his home in Independence, his every effort to find a solution to the Korean conflict having ended in abject failure. Too politically weak at home to make peace and too wise to embark on military adventures that might have resulted in a general war, he chose to leave office with the great issue of his second term unresolved. But Eisenhower faced no such dilemma and was able to end the fighting (July 27, 1953), by accepting a settlement for which Truman would have been damned, a peace without victory.[349]

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[348]Quoted in Neustadt, Presidential Power, 22.

[349]Walter Lippmann, New York Herald-Tribune, August 24, 1956. See also, Warren, President as World Leader, 345.

## CHAPTER IX

## THE RELIEF OF DOUGLAS MACARTHUR

> He was insubordinate and I fired him, just like Lincoln fired McClellan. Sure I knew there would be a lot of stink about it, but I didn't give a damn. It was the right thing to do and I did it.[1]

At the end of World War II, President Truman had boundless respect for his European and Pacific theater commanders, Generals Eisenhower and MacArthur. But his regard for both men was diminished by their separate challenges to his decisions as Commander in Chief during the Korean War. Although Eisenhower's bid for the presidency in 1952 was based on his credentials as a professional soldier, it was as a nominally-civilian candidate that he disputed Truman's military policies in the political arena. The American system can tolerate this type of dissent. But the challenge with which MacArthur confronted his Commander in Chief endangered the very basis of the civil-military relationship, if not the democratic system itself.

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[1]Truman is quoted in Phillips, "Truman at 75," 107.

The man destined to clash with Truman over Korean strategy was unlike the President in almost every respect. Where Truman had failed to be admitted to the United States Military Academy, MacArthur had graduated from West Point with a superlative record. The blunt, earthy Truman was so avowedly middle-class, middle-American that he seemed at times to be a caricature of the virtues and foibles ascribed to the type. His frequent trips back to his small hometown in Missouri seemed to be a necessary restorative. The suave, articulate MacArthur, on the other hand, was the regal, proud heir of his father (Arthur), a Medal of Honor winner, who retired in 1909 with the rank of lieutenant-general.[2] Douglas MacArthur had not even visited the United States for over a dozen years prior to his relief in 1951. Aside from their both being born in the 1880's and that both were sincere, dedicated Americans, there are few common denominators in the lives of the President and the General.

The potential for conflict had always been there. Truman was a firm believer in the principle of civil supremacy. MacArthur later testified to his acceptance of the fundamental concept of military subordination to

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[2]Joseph G. Hopkins (ed.), Concise Dictionary of American Biography (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1964), 599.

civilian authority.[3] But there was a lofty, imperious attitude about the General, probably fostered by his years as American proconsul for Japan, that belied these assurances. Perhaps the best indicator of the attitude that will lead him into contention with Truman can be found in a framed quotation from Livy which was prominently displayed on the wall of MacArthur's office in the Dai-Ichi Building, his headquarters in Tokyo. In part, it read:

> . . .I am not one of those who think that commanders ought at no time to receive advice. . . . What then is my opinion? That Commanders should be counselled chiefly by persons of known talent. . .who are present at the scene of action, who see the country, who see the enemy. . .and who, life people embarked in the same ship, are sharers of the danger. If, therefore, anyone thinks himself qualified to give advice respecting the war which I am to conduct. . .let him come with me into Macedonia. He shall be furnished with a ship, a horse, a tent; even his traveling charges shall be defrayed. But if he thinks this too much trouble, and prefers the repose of city life. . .let him not. . .assume the office of a pilot. The city in itself furnishes abundance of topics for conversation; let it confine its passion for talking within its own precincts and rest assured that we shall pay no attention to any councils but such as shall be framed within our camp.[4]

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[3]See, for example, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 27-28, 283-84, 289, 449-50; MacArthur, Reminiscences, 393. Truman made an extended statement on civil supremacy in his Memoirs, II, 444-45.

[4]The quotation from Livy is purported to be the views of Lucius Aemilius Paulus, a Roman general (c. 168 B.C.), see Rovere and Schlesinger, The General and the President, 120-21.

It would be an injustice to MacArthur to assume that his attitudes parallel those of the Roman general quoted in Livy. MacArthur did not ignore the "councils" framed by the Joint Chiefs and the Commander in Chief, even though they did not go with him into "Macedonia." But there is ample evidence that he did fight mightily against any of their orders which ran counter to his own thinking. He was also not above giving an interpretation to his directives which had the effect of accomodating Administration policy to his strategic concepts.

The first indication that MacArthur did not feel absolutely bound by the injunctions in his directives can be found in his order to the Far East Air Force on June 29, 1950 (Korean time), prior to the President's decision to become completely involved in Korea. MacArthur had ordered that airfields in North Korea be destroyed.[5] His operating directive, dated June 26, gave the Far East commander the authority to attack by air all military targets south of the thirty-eighth parallel.[6] The General made no effort to obtain clearance for an attack upon a nation with which the United States was not even "unofficially" at war. Courtney Whitney, MacArthur's aide and apostle, explained

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[5]Appleman, South to the Naktong, 44. This incident has been previously noted in Chapter VII.

[6]Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 535. See also, Paige, Korean Decision, 179-82.

ported to the President that MacArthur denied making any political comments in his conversations with Chiang and that while he disagreed on Formosan policy would ". . .as a soldier, obey any orders that he received from the President."[11]

In a press conference following Harriman's return, Truman was queried about MacArthur's views, which led to the following exchange:

> Q. General MacArthur says there are defeatists and appeasers who are working against him. Is anybody trying to set you against General MacArthur?
> THE PRESIDENT. I haven't met anybody yet.
> Q. What was your answer, Mr. President?
> THE PRESIDENT. I haven't met anybody of that sort yet. General MacArthur and I are in perfect agreement, and have been ever since he has been in the job he is now. I put him there, and I also appointed him Commander in Chief of American and Allied Forces, at the suggestion of the United Nations. I am satisfied with what he is doing.[12]

Truman's satisfaction with the perfect accord between himself and MacArthur was short-lived. The Presi-

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[11]Quoted from Harriman's report to the President, which is printed in Truman, Memoirs, II, 349-53. For MacArthur's statement regarding Harriman's visit, see his Reminiscences, 340-41. See also, Ridgway, Korean War, 38; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 70-72; Phillips, Truman Presidency, 317; Neustadt, Presidential Power, 24.

[12]Item No. 209, Press Conference, August 10, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 580. The reporter's question with regard to "defeatists and appeasers" was probably inspired by a press release issued by MacArthur just after Harriman's visit. Spanier believes the statement was directed at MacArthur's superiors in Washington. Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 72-73.

that the General had made a discretionary decision within the "normal latitude" granted to field commanders.[7] Only an extraordinarily-broad reading of the directive would allow such an interpretation. In any event, on the following day, (June 29 in Washington), Truman approved an order giving MacArthur the authority he had already assumed to attack beyond the thirty-eighth parallel.[8]

MacArthur paid a brief visit to Formosa on July 31, 1950. While the General did not say so specifically, Truman received the clear impression from newspaper accounts and statements by Chiang Kai-shek and his aides, that MacArthur rejected the President's decision to neutralize the Nationalist Chinese refuge.[9] Truman was concerned enough about the comments in the press to send Averell Harriman to Toyko to give MacArthur an account of the Administration's views on foreign policy, particularly as to planning with regard to the Far East.[10] Harriman later re-

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[7]Whitney, MacArthur, 326.

[8]Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 536.

[9]Statement of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, August 2, 1950, in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3383-84. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 354; Collins, War in Peacetime, 272. For MacArthur's statement regarding his trip to Formosa, see New York Times, August 1, 1950. See also, a further statement attributed to a "reliable source" in ibid., August 6, 1950.

[10]Truman, Memoirs, II, 353-54. See also, Collins, War in Peacetime, 273.

dent later recalled that he erred in assuming ". . .General MacArthur would accept the Formosa policy laid down by his Commander in Chief."[13] Two weeks after Harriman's return, on August 26, Truman was given a copy of a message from MacArthur to Clyde A. Lewis, commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The message, sent at Lewis' request, was to be read at the National Encampment in Chicago on August 28.[14] MacArthur told the VFW that he believed it to be in the public interest that he clear up the ". . .misconceptions currently being voiced concerning the relationship of Formosa to our strategic potential in the Pacific."[15] He then went into detail on the great strategic importance that the island of Formosa represented, describing it as the keystone of the protective shield defending the Pacific area and the Americas. After establishing that Formosa was pivotal to maintenance of the defensive perimeter in the Pacific, MacArthur said that if this line were lost, war would inevitably result. The neutralization of Formosa, on the grounds that it lacked strategic importance and that any other course might alienate continental Asia--which was Truman's policy as communi-

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[13] Truman, Memoirs, II, 354.

[14] Ibid. See also, Hunt, Untold Story of Douglas MacArthur, 462.

[15] New York Times, August 29, 1950.

cated to MacArthur by Harriman--was fallacious reasoning by those who understood neither "broad strategic concepts" nor the Oriental mind. To MacArthur, existing policy was defeatism and appeasement. He closed with high praise for the President's decision to intervene in Korea.[16]

MacArthur later wrote that his VFW message was apolitical and in full support of Truman's policy respecting Formosa. He said he did not know how his message was so construed as to imply the reverse of the intended meaning, nor how the President could be "so easily deceived," presumably, by his military or political advisers.[17] Truman, on the other hand, believed that the tone of the entire message was an expression of criticism of the policy MacArthur had told Harriman he would support, and that this was the way the General intended it to read. The President

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[16] Ibid. Text of MacArthur's message also appears in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3187-89; Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), Truman Administration, 443-46. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 354-55; MacArthur, Reminiscences, 341; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 423; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 73-74; Hunt, Untold Story of Douglas MacArthur, 462-64; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 39.

[17] MacArthur, Reminiscences, 341-42. General Whitney claims that MacArthur always felt that his message "innocently ran afoul" of a State Department scheme to turn Formosa over to the Communists. Whitney, MacArthur, 381.

felt that the VFW message was a direct contradiction of his statements to Congress as well as his announcement of June 27. It was also, he felt, contrary to a letter Ambassador Austin had just written to the UN Secretary-General on his instructions.[18]

Shortly after reading a copy of the VFW message on August 26, Truman attended a previously-scheduled meeting with the Secretaries of State, Defense, and Treasury, the Joint Chiefs, and Harriman. Acheson recalls that the President entered the room obviously disturbed, his lips "white and compressed." He read them MacArthur's message and then asked each in turn if he had any prior knowledge of the document. All responded negatively. Truman then instructed Secretary of Defense Johnson to inform MacArthur that he (the President) was ordering him to immediately withdraw his statement to the VFW.[19] Truman was aware that

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[18]Truman, Memoirs, II, 354-55. For text of the letter, Austin to Trygve Lie, August 25, 1950, see Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3473-74. The June 27 statement was Truman's original announcement of his decision to neutralize Formosa. See Item No. 173, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 492. I.F. Stone felt that MacArthur, through means like the VFW message, deliberately tried to start a world war. See Hidden History of the Korean War, 92.

[19]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 423; Truman, Memoirs, II, 356. See also, Phillips, Truman Presidency, 318. Many of those present at this meeting later testified to their views on the VFW message during the hearings on MacArthur's relief. See Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 716-18; Pt. 2, 929-30, 934-36, 1051-52, 1306, 1590-91; Pt. 3, 2002; Pt. 4, 2586-87, 2589-90, 2616-17.

the message, having been released by MacArthur's staff to the press in Tokyo, had already appeared in several newspapers and at least one national magazine when he ordered it withdrawn. But by ordering its recall he could demonstrate that the General's views did not represent national policy, on which, Truman said, there could be "only one voice"--his.[20] The order read: "The President of the United States directs that you withdraw your message for. . .Veterans of Foreign Wars because various features with respect to Formosa are in conflict with the policy of the United States. . . ."[21]

Personal memoirs are particularly suspect on such points, but Truman has recorded that it was at this juncture he first gave "serious thought" to relieving MacArthur. If so, he kept it to himself. He recalled that he considered taking just the field command in Korea away from him and giving it to Omar Bradley. Truman rejected the idea since it would appear he was demoting MacArthur, whom he had no desire to injure personally.[22] Instead, he decided

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[20]Truman, Memoirs, II, 355; New York Herald-Tribune, August 29, 1950.

[21]Johnson to MacArthur, August 26, 1950, printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3480; New York Herald-Tribune, August 29, 1950; Truman, Memoirs, II, 356.

[22]Truman, Memoirs, II, 356.

on a far milder course, a note to his Far East Commander explaining the necessity for his order to withdraw the VFW message.

Truman wrote to MacArthur on August 29, enclosing a letter he had written to Ambassador Austin, and calling the General's attention to a letter from Austin to UN Secretary-General Lie, a copy of which had been forwarded to Far East Headquarters on the date it was written, August 25. The President's note was brief, explaining that he was certain that once MacArthur had read these letters he would understand why the withdrawal order was given.[23] The letter Truman sent to Austin, dated the twenty-seventh, the day after he became aware of MacArthur's message to the VFW, was released to the press by the White House. An obvious effort to counter the effect of the VFW message, it restated the points made in Austin's letter to the Secretary-General, emphasizing that the ambassador's letter accurately reflected the fundamental position of the Government respecting neutralization of Formosa and a desire to limit conflict in the Far East.[24] The controversy died down soon afterward, smothered by the news of MacArthur's

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[23]Truman to MacArthur, August 29, 1950, Truman Papers, OF, 584-MacArthur's Proposed VFW Message, Truman Library.

[24]Truman to Austin, August 27, 1950, Tannenwald Papers, Subject File (Benton-MacArthur), Truman Library.

smashing triumph in the Inchon invasion and the subsequent elimination of the aggressors from South Korea.[25]

Truman and MacArthur had their only face-to-face meeting on Wake Island October 15, 1950, a month after Inchon.[26] Two years later, Truman said regarding Wake Island: "I made a 14,400-mile trip to get a lot of misinformation."[27] He described the misinformation from MacArthur as the assurance that China would not intervene, that the war was over, and that it would be possible to release a regular Army division from Far East service for occupation duties in Germany.[28] There is ample evidence

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[25]Richard Lowitt (ed.), The Truman-MacArthur Controversy (Chicago: Rand-McNally, 1967), 13. Truman claimed that in their private conversation at Wake Island (October 15), MacArthur apologized for the embarassment caused by his VFW letter. See Memoirs, II, 365.

[26]This meeting has been examined at length in the preceding chapter.

[27]Item No. 345, Press Conference, December 11, 1952, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1952-53, 1074. Truman had made an earlier reference to MacArthur's misjudgment (at Wake Island) in a Jefferson-Jackson Day address, April 14, 1951. See MacArthur Chronology, entry for October 15, 1950, Tannenwald Papers, Subject File, Chronology-MacArthur Hearings, Truman Library.

[28]Item No. 345, Press Conference, December 11, 1952, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1952-53, 1074. D.F. Fleming felt MacArthur lied about Chinese intent, that he already knew they were in North Korea in force. See The Cold War, II, 617-18, citing Gordon Walker, Christian Science Monitor, November 29, 1951.

that MacArthur did make these estimates and that they were gross miscalculations of what subsequently transpired; but the General was guilty only of overconfidence. The same intelligence information upon which he based his unfortunate estimates was also known to the President, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the others present at this meeting. No one saw fit at the time, nor, in fact, until events proved otherwise, to challenge MacArthur's assertions.[29]

In his post-Wake Island statements, the President went to great pains to emphasize that there were no disagreements on policy between himself and MacArthur. In a statement issued the day of the meeting Truman spoke of, ". . .the very complete unanimity of view which prevailed. . . ."[30] Two days later, speaking at San Francisco, the President admitted that one of his reasons for going to Wake Island was that he felt a need to make it clear, by talking with MacArthur, ". . .that there is complete unity in the aims and conduct of our foreign policy."[31]

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[29]Substance of Statements Made at Wake Island (passim.); Appleman, South to the Naktong, 761.

[30]Item No. 268, Statement by the President on His Meeting with General MacArthur at Wake Island, October 15, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 672.

[31]Item No. 269, Address in San Francisco at the War Memorial Opera House, October 17, 1950, ibid., 673. Full text of this address is also printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3486-91.

To a press conference on October 19 Truman explained: "There is no disagreement between General MacArthur and myself."[32] MacArthur did not see it this way. When asked in his dismissal hearing if Truman's statement regarding their complete accord, particularly regarding Formosa, was a misinterpretation, MacArthur agreed that it was. The day after his return to Tokyo, MacArthur testified, "I issued a statement. . .that there had been absolutely no change on my part in any views I held as to the strategic value of Formosa."[33] This is most revealing of MacArthur's inability to completely subordinate himself to the President's authority. It seemed never to occur to him that a soldier on active duty should not issue press releases as counters to statements made by his commander in chief.

Two incidents which occurred shortly after the Wake Island meeting demonstrate MacArthur's irresponsible disregard for the limitations imposed by modern warfare. On October 24 he told his commanders to use American units in their drive to the Yalu, in unquestionable violation of

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[32]Item No. 270, Press Conference, October 19, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 679. See also, Neustadt, Presidential Power, 48.

[33]MacArthur testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 41. See also, Fleming, The Cold War, II, 618. For Truman's initial statement regarding the accord on Formosa, see Substance of Statements Made at Wake Island, 8; Bradley testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 928.

a directive received a month earlier, stipulating that only Korean forces were to be used in the northern provinces.[34] Less than two weeks later (November 5), MacArthur ordered the Air Force to destroy the Korean end of all bridges crossing the Yalu River. Again, his order was not consistent with his instructions regarding aerial operations near the Manchurian border.[35] In both instances the Far East commander did not request a change of orders. In both instances the General later explained away his preemptory actions on the basis of military necessity and a broad, unique interpretation of his directives that was never envisioned by their authors.[36] MacArthur won both cases: in the first, the JCS deferred to his judgment, although aware he had violated orders. In the second, he

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[34]Collins testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1216-17, 1228-31, 1240; Ridgway, Korean War, 61. See also, Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 124-25, 128-29.

[35]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 463; Collins, War in Peacetime, 200; Truman, Memoirs, II, 373-74. See also, MacArthur, Reminiscences, 368; Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 602-603.

[36]In 1951 Admiral Sherman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff testified: ". . .throughout this period the conduct of affairs was made difficult by a lack of responsiveness to the obvious intentions of the directives which were transmitted out there and a tendency to debate and in certain cases to criticize." Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1630. See also, Bradley testimony, ibid., 1146; Payne, Marshall Story, 316.

successfully appealed over the heads of his military superiors to the Commander in Chief. In winning these two skirmishes against Washington, MacArthur converted the strong likelihood of massive Chinese intervention into a certainty, and then lost this last battle of a brilliant career.

The overwhelming Chinese onslaught in late November brought about a dramatic military reversal and marked the beginning of the second and final phase of the conflict between the President and the General. Truman, while believing that the general assault northward begun on the twenty-fourth was ill-advised, did not blame MacArthur for failing to defeat a vastly-superior army. What the President found inexcusable was MacArthur's resorting to public attacks on the Administration, alleging that extraordinary limitations made his defeat inevitable.[37]

From the time China intervened until his relief, MacArthur persisted in taking his case to the people, arguing that the military limitations imposed upon him were all that stood in the way of a decisive victory. On November 28 MacArthur denied that he had made the "home by Christmas" statement when launching the general offensive

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[37] Truman, Memoirs, II, 381-82. See also, Hoare, "Truman," 202.

on the twenty-fourth.[38] Two days later, responding to a radiogram from Arthur Krock, MacArthur said that every strategic and tactical movement made by his forces was in accord with UN resolutions and his directives. He had taken no "major steps" without prior, full approval. MacArthur told Krock that no "authoritative source" had ever suggested he halt his advance at any point before the Yalu River boundary. (The Joint Chiefs had made such a suggestion.) China's intervention, MacArthur continued, was long premeditated. "It is historically inaccurate to attribute any degree of responsibility for the onslaught of the Chinese Communist armies to the strategic course of the campaign itself."[39]

On the first day of December MacArthur granted an interview (by telegraph) to the editor of U.S. News and World Report. When asked how his military operations were affected by the imposed limitations, particularly regarding the Manchurian sanctuary, the General described these limitations as "an enormous handicap, without precedent in

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[38] MacArthur to Ray Henle ("Sun Oil Three-Star Extra" radio news broadcast), November 28, 1950, quoted in Washington Post, November 29, 1950.

[39] MacArthur to Arthur Krock, November 30, 1950, published in New York Times, November 30, 1950. Text is also printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3496.

military history."[40] In a telegram to the United Press of the same date, MacArthur expressed similar sentiments. He said that he was faced with an "entirely new war" against vastly superior numbers, a situation brought about by his having to accept military odds, ". . .without precedent in history--the odds of permitting offensive action without defensive retaliation."[41] Comments in a similar vein from MacArthur were contained in a general press release to the Tokyo press corps on December 2.[42]

In all these statements to the press, MacArthur consistently stressed four points: First, he denied that his movements toward the Yalu had in any way triggered China's intervention. Second, his "end the war" (or, "home by Christmas," or, "reconaissance in force") offensive launched on November 24 had forced the enemy to commit forces prematurely and had totally disrupted the ene-

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[40] New York Times, December 2, 1950; See also, Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3532-33; Collins, War in Peacetime, 279. For a list of all restrictions placed upon the conduct of military operations in Korea, see Marshall to Richard B. Russell, May 23, 1951, printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, Appendix K, 3192-93.

[41] MacArthur to Hugh Baille, December 1, 1950, published in New York Herald-Tribune, December 2, 1950.

[42] Washington Post, December 3, 1950. MacArthur communicated similar messages to Barry Faris, International News Service, and Ward Price of the London Daily Mail. See Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 149.

my's strategic plans, which called for the conquest of all Korea by a continuous sweeping movement southward. Third, MacArthur took exception to reports that his forces were in full retreat, explaining that his troops were executing a predetermined retrograde movement in magnificent order. Fourth, he was unable to defeat the Chinese because of the unreasonable strictures imposed upon the conduct of his operations.[43]

Truman grew quickly out of patience with the press barrage coming from his Far East commander. He was concerned, too, over the confusion regarding American policy that MacArthur's statements were generating in other nations.[44] The President sent the following memorandum to all government agencies on December 6:

> In the light of the present critical international situation, and until further written notice from me, I wish that each one of you would take immediate steps to reduce the number of public

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[43]These four "themes" in MacArthur's statements were identified and elaborated upon by Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 149-50. See also, Rovere and Schlesinger, The General and the President, 152-53; Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 90. For his own exposition on the second and third points, see MacArthur to Frank W. Boykin, December 13, 1950, Truman Papers, OF, 471-B - Korean Emergency, Truman Library.

[44]Truman, Memoirs, II, 383. Truman also wrote that while he was disturbed that he and MacArthur were so far apart in their viewpoints, ". . .it was always proper and appropriate for him to advance his opinion to his Commander in Chief. If he had gone no farther than that, I would never have felt compelled to relieve him." Ibid., 416.

> speeches pertaining to foreign or military policy made by officials of the departments and agencies of the executive branch. This applies to officials in the field as well as in Washington.
>
> No speech, press release, or other public statement concerning foreign policy should be released until it has received clearance from the Department of State.
>
> No speech, press release, or other public statement concerning military policy should be released until it has received clearance from the Department of Defense.
>
> In addition to the copies submitted to the Departments of State or Defense for clearance, advance copies of speeches and press releases concerning foreign policy or military policy should be submitted to the White House for information.
>
> The purpose of this memorandum is not to curtail the flow of information to the American people, but rather to insure that the information made public is accurate and fully in accord with the policies of the United States Government.[45]

In a memorandum to the Secretaries of State and Defense the same day, Truman instructed them to order all overseas officials, "including military commanders," to be extremely cautious in their public utterances and to obtain clearance for all but the most routine statements. Additionally, they were to be instructed, in Truman's words, ". . .to refrain from direct communication on military or foreign policy with newspapers, magazines, or other publicity media in the United States."[46] Although these messa-

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[45] Truman's memorandum was transmitted verbatim to MacArthur in JCS to CINCFE, December 6, 1950, Truman Papers, OF, 584-MacArthur's dismissal, Truman Library.

[46] Ibid. See also, New York Herald-Tribune, April 12, 1951; Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3536; Guttman (ed.), Korea and the Theory of Limited War, 11; Collins, War in Peacetime, 280.

ges were not addressed directly to MacArthur, there can be no doubt that he was the target.[47] General Bradley later testified that prior to MacArthur's press statements such an order had never been necessary, ". . .because it is tradition and custom and common practice of military men, when speaking on policy matters, to submit them, submit their views, for approval."[48]

For the second time Truman considered dismissing MacArthur, but rejected the idea. He later regretted it: "I should have relieved General MacArthur then and there."[49] He said he did not because it would appear that MacArthur was being fired for the failure of the November offensive. Truman said that he had no desire to hit the General while he was down. He did not even wish to reprimand him directly.[50] This, then, is the apparent reason for the "scatter-gun" technique of issuing orders that every government em-must clear military and foreign policy statements.

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[47] See, for example, Truman, Memoirs, II, 383; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 472; Acheson testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1863; Marshall testimony, ibid., Pt. 1, 342; Bradley testimony, ibid., Pt. 2, 880.

[48] Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 889. See also, ibid., 1020. MacArthur's view was that he had been "muzzled" by "anonymous sources high in government circles," who were propagandizing against him. See Reminiscences, 385.

[49] Truman, Memoirs, II, 384.

[50] Ibid.

The target of Truman's orders must have been hit by the salvo, for MacArthur was publicly silent on policy questions throughout December and January. He continued to struggle with the Joint Chiefs, but through the proper, non-public channels. The old warrior's private dissent was still vigorous. In a mid-January letter to a West Point classmate, who had written to congragulate his on his seventy-first birthday, MacArthur said he was having a difficult time maintaining troop integrity and a stable situation because of the "handicaps and delimitations" which had been imposed upon him. The confusion which existed over the political ramifications determining military conduct, he wrote, were without parallel in American history. MacArthur closed by telling his friend not to be shocked if news came that he had gone to his "last round-up" at the end of a rope, hanged from an oriental telephone pole.[51]

A "leak" developed in MacArthur's headquarters on February 6, 1951. The Associated Press reported that MacArthur had recommended the use of Chinese Nationalist forces against the Chinese mainland and in Korea. The unidentified source also indicated that the General had, on three occasions, sought permission to bomb the "privileged

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[51] MacArthur to Charles Patterson, c. January 15, 1951, quoted in MacArthur, Reminiscences, footnote, 382.

sanctuary" in Manchuria. MacArthur was reportedly stressing that there could be no turning back in the struggle against Communism, not just in Korea, but throughout the Orient.[52] A week later, under his own name, MacArthur issued a public statement which attacked strategic proposals then under active consideration by the Joint Chiefs, the National Security Council and the President. He said that he was still fighting a war of maneuver and dismissed "the concept being advanced by some" that a switch be made to positional warfare by the establishment of a defensive line across the Korean penisula. This, MacArthur said, was strategically unsound and would result in the piecemeal destruction of UN forces. He again lashed out at the unprecedented military advantage which sanctuary gave to the Chinese, who were ". . .engaging with impunity in undeclared war against us. . . ."[53]

General MacArthur must have come to a decision in February that he could no longer remain publicly silent on policy. Whether he sought only personal exculpation from the defeat in Korea, or still hoped to garner victory by forcing Truman and the Defense Department to yield to mass

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[52] New York Herald-Tribune, February 7, 1951.

[53] New York Times, February 14, 1951. Secretary Marshall later testified that this statement did not, in his judgment, comply with the December 6, 1950, directive of the President. Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 475.

popular support for his ideas is not certain. He begins to emerge as a Billy Mitchell-type figure, striving to change the strategic thinking of a static bureaucracy. There was one significant difference: MacArthur wished to revert to an older concept of warfare, one that recognized no political limitations.

The depths of MacArthur's bitterness and frustration can be gathered from a conversation he had in February with General Mark Clark, then Chief of Army Field Forces. MacArthur dwelt on the errors in policy of "great magnitude and danger" being made in Washington. His views and recommendations, he told Clark, had been largely ignored "at critical times." In this regard, he was most critical of the Joint Chiefs. MacArthur found it incomprehensible that the Administration continued to allow sanctuary, providing the enemy with a secure base of supply and air operations. Clark, who would eventually replace Ridgway in the Far East command post, agreed with MacArthur on the sanctuary question then and later.[54]

The Far East commander was back on his most persistent theme, the "abnormal conditions" affecting his command, in another public statement issued March 7, 1951. MacArthur closed this release by insisting that important politico-military decisions, far beyond his authority, had

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[54]Clark, Danube to the Yalu, 25-26.

yet to be made. These decisions, he said, would have to provide ". . .on the international level an answer to the obscurities which now becloud the unsolved problems raised by Red China's undeclared war in Korea."[55] Later, when asked by Senator Lyndon Johnson if the closing lines of this release complied "meticulously" with the President's directive, Secretary Marshall testified that he did not think that it did.[56] The Secretary of State had an even stronger reaction to a statement by MacArthur to Hugh Baille, president of United Press, eight days later. The General criticized the decision to halt at the thirty-eighth parallel, since this did not achieve the mission of Korean unification. Acheson believed that MacArthur's March 15 statement was a new move, from "private harassment" of the Administration, to open defiance of Truman's order regarding unauthorized comment on national policy.[57]

The conflict between Truman and MacArthur was rapidly intensifying. On March 20, as previously described, the Joint Chiefs informed MacArthur that the State Depart-

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[55] New York Times, March 8, 1951. This statement, like those issued in February, was not cleared through the Pentagon. See also, Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 105-106.

[56] Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 476.

[57] Acheson, Present at the Creation, 518.

ment was in the process of drafting a statement in which Truman would seek a negotiated settlement.[58] In a release from Tokyo four days later MacArthur stated his willingness to negotiate a military settlement with the enemy commander. His statement also contained a thinly-veiled threat that if a settlement were not reached the United Nations might well extend military operations to the coastal areas and interior bases of China, bringing about its military collapse.[59]

An Administration spokesman quickly informed the press that MacArthur's statement involved political issues beyond his responsibility as a field commander.[60] However, convinced that any possibility for negotiations had been temporarily forestalled, Truman abandoned the effort. In the President's view, MacArthur's statement "flouted" UN policy. The General, Truman said, was in open defiance of the Commander in Chief, challenging the very basis of the civil authority of the President over the military estab-

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[58] JCS to CINCFE, March 20, 1951, copy in Tannenwald Papers, Subject File, Chronology-MacArthur Hearings, Truman Library.

[59] New York Times, March 24, 1951, Text of MacArthur's statement is also printed in Reminiscences, 387-88; Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3181, 3541-42; Lowitt (ed.), Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 39. See also, Millis, "Truman and MacArthur," 50-51.

[60] M.J. McDermott (Statement), March 24, 1951, Truman Papers, OF, 584, Truman Library.

lished in the Constitution. "By this act," Truman wrote, MacArthur left me no choice--I could no longer tolerate his insubordination."[61] Despite this emphatic statement (in his memoirs), Truman waited over two more weeks before relieving the Far East commander. His only immediate act was to order the JCS to tell MacArthur that he (the President) was directing his attention to the December 6 order and stipulating that any further statements be cleared through channels.[62]

Millions of copies of his March 24 statement had been printed and air-dropped over enemy territory on MacArthur's authority. He explained later that this was part of "psychological warfare."[63] MacArthur testified in his dismissal hearing before Congress that his statement was a "cold military appraisal" designed to end the bloodshed and bring peace. It had, he said, no relationship to the JCS message of the twentieth regarding the drafting of a peace-feeler for issue by the President. Nor, according

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[61]Truman, Memoirs, II, 442. See also, Hoare, "Truman," 203. For the views of other participants regarding the effect of MacArthur's March 24 statement, see Marshall testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 349, 428-29, 442-45, 486-7; Collins testimony, ibid., Pt. 2, 1196-97, 1207; Sherman testimony, ibid., 1591-92; Acheson testimony, ibid., 1591-92.

[62]JCS to CINCFE, March 24, 1951, copy in Tannenwald Papers, Subject File, Chronology-MacArthur Hearings, Truman Library.

[63]MacArthur testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 72.

to MacArthur, was his message designed to embarrass Truman ". . .or anyone else working to bring about peace."[64] Less than six months later, addressing the American Legion, MacArthur was to say that his statement had prevented a disgraceful plot to appease China by surrendering Formosa and turning Nationalist China's United Nation's seat over to Peking in return for peace in Korea. MacArthur told the Legionaires that he had "unquestionably wrecked" this plot.[65]

House Minority Leader Joseph W. Martin precipitated MacArthur's dismissal by disclosing a letter received from the General on the floor of the House, April 5, 1951. Martin had written to MacArthur on March 8 requesting his views on the Far East.[66] The General's now-famed response was not unique. He dwelt on the same basic themes:

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[64] Ibid., 68-72, 285.

[65] Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 201. Without offering any more substantiation than MacArthur did, two of his boiographers claimed such a plot existed and that MacArthur deliberately blocked it with his March 24 statement. See Whitney, MacArthur, 467-68; Hunt, Untold Story of Douglas MacArthur, 507-510.

[66] Martin to MacArthur, March 8, 1951, printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3182, 3543. Text of letter is also published in Hunt, Untold Story of Douglas MacArthur, 511. For Martin's explanation of why he made MacArthur's letter public (a "tocsin" needed "to bring the President and the Secretary of State to their senses"), see Lowitt (ed.), Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 43-44.

Release from the imposed limitations, utilization of Chinese Nationalist armies, recognition that while Europe received all of the attention, he was fighting the Battle of Armageddon in Asia.[67] MacArthur considered the exchange of letters letters with Martin innocuous, just another courtesy to a Congressman, phrased in very general terms.[68] Viewed as a piece of private corrospondence, it was just that. When Martin chose (without MacArthur's consent) to make the letter public it became a controversial document.

Writing in his memoirs, Truman dealt at length with the letter to Representative Martin. He dissected the two principal paragraphs, noting MacArthur's inconsistency on the employment of Formosan troops, disagreeing with the General's "Asia-first" philosophy, and holding that the idea of "meeting force with maximum counterforce" was not part of the American tradition. He ended his examination of MacArthur's letter with the following comments:

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[67] MacArthur to Martin, March 20, 1951, printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3182, 3543-44. Test of the letter also appears in MacArthur, Reminiscences, 386; Guttman (ed.), Korea and the Theory of Limited War, 13; Truman, Memoirs, II, 445-46; Payne, Marshall Story, 317; Willoughby and Chamberlain, MacArthur, 421-22.

[68] MacArthur, Reminiscences, 386; MacArthur testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 46-47, 113.

> The time had come to draw the line. MacArthur's letter to Congressman Martin showed that the general was not only in disagreement with the policy of the government but was challenging this policy in open insubordination to his Commander in Chief.[69]

It was not the Martin letter that determined the President to dismiss MacArthur. Truman wrote that after March 24 he could no longer tolerate this insubordination.[70] That MacArthur was to be fired had already been decided; only the means and timing were undetermined. The Martin letter was merely the catalytic agent which initiated the process.[71]

Shortly after Martin read MacArthur's letter to the House of Representatives, Secretary of State Acheson received a call from the White House instructing him to meet with the President and Secretary of Defense Marshall the next morning. Acheson had no doubt as to the subject of this meeting.[72] General Bradley also received a call

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[69]Truman, Memoirs, II, 446-47. For other participants's opinions in testimony on the Martin letter, see Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 113-15, 380, 445-47, 572-73, 581-82.

[70]Truman, Memoirs, II, 442, 448.

[71]I.F. Stone, for one, would disagree with this conclusion. He said that the Martin letter--an "open alliance" between MacArthur and the Republican opposition--precipitated MacArthur's relief. Hidden History of the Korean War, 275. Spanier takes a somewhat similar view in Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 202-204.

[72]Acheson testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1733, 1751, 1910. See also, Acheson, Present at the Creation, 520.

that afternoon, although he was not able to recall who it was from, advising him that the President was very concerned about MacArthur's statements. Bradley held a brief meeting with the Chiefs of Staff immediately afterward, warning them that they should consider what recommendations they would make respecting the military implications of a possible relief of General MacArthur.[73]

Truman met wich Acheson, Marshall, Bradley and Harriman in his office, Friday morning, April 6. He asked for their views on what should be done about MacArthur's open defiance of the Commander in Chief.[74] Knowing that if he stated his views it would influence the advice he received, Truman did not contribute to the discussion. Harriman offered the opinion that MacArthur should have been dismissed two years earlier. The three other advisers present were more conservative in their remarks. Marshall wanted time to reflect. He also told Truman that firing MacArthur might cause problems in getting the military appropriations bill through Congress. Bradley believed that on the basis of his statements the President

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[73]General Collins, the Army Chief of Staff, was not present at this meeting. He was represented by his deputy, General Haislip. For testimony concerning this meeting, see Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 739, 745-46, 759-60, 1015, 1018-19, 1601; Pt. 3, 1734.

[74]Truman, Memoirs, II, 447; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 521; Acheson testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1910.

would be justified in relieving MacArthur, but indicated a desire to consult with the other members of the Joint Chiefs before making a final recommendation. Acheson agreed on the question of dismissal, but was concerned about the political, military and diplomatic repercussions. He cautioned against making a hasty decision, since basic questions were involved, particularly the prerogatives and duties of the President as Commander in Chief in his relationship to a prestigious commander who was one of his most important military subordinates. He warned the President that if the decision was made to relieve MacArthur, he would face the greatest political battle of his Administration. Acheson later confided in his memoirs, "There was no doubt what General MacArthur deserved; the sole issue was the wisest way to administer it."[75] Truman made no decisions at this meeting. He asked those present to meet among themselves and then meet again with him the following morning.[76]

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[75]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 521. See also, Truman, Memoirs, II, 447; Acheson testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1776-77, 1910, 1979-80.

[76]Bradley testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 1047. Acheson testimony, ibid., Pt. 3, 1751; Truman, Memoirs, II, 447-48. During the Far East Hearings, General Bradley, under questioning by Senator Alexander Wiley (Republican, Wisconsin), refused to divulge what was said by any persons present at the meetings with the President regarding MacArthur's dismissal: ". . .in my position as an adviser, one of the military advisers to the President. . .if I have to publicize my recommendations and my

The meeting together of the four advisers Friday afternoon and their subsequent meeting with the President on Saturday, April 7, were inconclusive. In the Friday meeting General Marshall asked the others for their opinions as to the possibility of ordering MacArthur to Washington for consultation and arriving at a final determination after that. Acheson, Bradley and Harriman were all opposed. The Secretary of State's objections were all based on political considerations.[77] Truman's session with the same four advisers on Saturday morning was brief. Marshall told the President that he had read all the communications received from MacArthur since 1949 and now agreed

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discussions. . .my value as an adviser is ruined." Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 763. Chairman Richard Russell (Democrat, Georgia), ruled that Bradley was justified in holding that his talks with Truman constituted a privileged communication and was not, therefore, in contempt of Congress. Russell's ruling was appealed and a lengthy debate ensued lasting two days and occupying over one hundred pages of the hearings record. The senators argued at length over the principle of the separation of powers, investigative powers of Congress, the relationship of the military to the Commander in Chief, and numerous other related questions. In the end, the chair was sustained, eighteen to eight, on a bipartisan vote. Four Republicans voted with the majority, and two Democrats, J. William Fulbright (Arkansas), Guy M. Gillette (Iowa), voting with the minority. See Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 762-872. Truman later had high praise for Bradley's refusal to testify to conversations held with him as Commander in Chief, believing it to involve a basic question as to the validity of the separation of powers principle. See Truman, Memoirs, II, 452-53.

[77]Acheson, Present at the Creation, 521-22; Acheson testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1751; Bradley testimony, ibid., Pt. 2, 1047.

with Harriman that he should have been fired two years earlier. Truman directed Bradley to obtain the opinions of the Chiefs of Staff from a "purely military" point of view. He accepted a suggestion that all present dwell privately on the question over the weekend and instructed them to be prepared to make their final recommendations to him on Monday.[78]

General Bradley met with the Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon on Sunday afternoon, April 8, in order to obtain their views. They all concurred; MacArthur should be dismissed. There was discussion among them as to the feasibility of relieving MacArthur of just the Korean command and allowing him to remain in his post as Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers for Japan (SCAP), but this was ruled out as impractical. The four members of the JCS met later in the afternoon with Secretary Marshall, and each presented his own reasons for agreeing to the dismissal. As later reported by General Bradley, the Joint Chiefs had three basic reasons for concurring in the removal: first, the General's official communications and public statements indicated a lack of sympathy with the limited war policy in Korea; second, MacArthur had

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[78] Truman, Memoirs, II, 448; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 522; Marshall testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 345, 420; Bradley testimony, ibid., Pt. 3, 1751-52, 1911.

violated the President's directive relative to clearing public statements; third, ". . .the Joint Chiefs of Staff, have felt and feel now that the military must be controlled by civilian authority in this country," and MacArthur's actions were jeopardizing this control.[79]

Meeting with the President at nine o'clock Monday morning, Bradley informed him of the unanimous concurrence of the JCS.[80] Marshall, Acheson and Harriman, each in his turn, indicated agreement that General MacArthur should be immediately relieved of all his commands. It was only then that Truman told them: "I had already made up my mind that General MacArthur had to go when he made his statement of March 24."[81] The President directed that or-

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[79]Bradley testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 878-81; Collins testimony, ibid., 1215-16. The reasons that the Joint Chiefs concurred in the dismissal were examined at great length by the members of the committee. Perhaps this was because MacArthur had repeatedly insisted that he and the JCS were in total accord. MacArthur testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 283. The page numbers that follow all cite testimony on this singular subject of the reasons for JCS concurrence. Ibid., Pt. 1, 322-23, 475, 517-18, 586-87; Pt. 2, 739-40, 893, 908-909, 1042-43, 1107, 1187, 1195-96, 1198-1200, 1209, 1215, 1252, 1264, 1269, 1348-51, 1356-58, 1391, 1403, 1441-46, 1571-72, 1578-79, 1598-99; Pt. 3, 2346-47.

[80]Truman, Memoirs, II, 448; Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 347. After his presidency, Truman said MacArthur would never have been relieved if the Joint Chiefs of Staff were in control of policy. Truman Speaks, 24.

[81]Truman, Memoirs, II, 448; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 522. See also, Marshall testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 345, 420-21; Acheson testimony, ibid., Pt. 3, 1752, 1911.

ders be prepared relieving MacArthur and appointing General Ridgway as his successor. These orders and a draft public statement were brought to the President at three o'clock, Tuesday, April 10, and he approved them.[82]

An unfortunate series of events disrupted the process by which MacArthur was to be informed of his relief. It was originally planned that the Secretary of the Army, Frank Pace, who was then in Korea, would personally inform the General in Tokyo. The orders were to be wired in State Department code to Ambassador Muccio in Pusan for delivery to Pace, whom, it was assumed, was with Muccio. However, Pace was visiting the front with Ridgway at the time. In addition, a power unit failed at Pusan, delaying receipt of the message from the State Department. At this point, General Bradley came to Blair House to tell Truman that the news had apparently leaked and was to be published by a Chicago paper in the morning, long before Pace could reach MacArthur. The President, perhaps to avoid giving his antagonist an opportunity to resign before he was fired, ordered that MacArthur be informed immediately and

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[82] Truman, Memoirs, II, 448. See also, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 345; Pt. 3, 1752. Truman apparently erred when he wrote that he received and approved of these draft orders relieving MacArthur on Monday, April 9. See Memoirs, II, 448.

directly over the Army's own communications network.[83]

At one o'clock in the morning, April 11, reporters were summoned to the White House and given a series of hurriedly-reproduced copies of the dismissal order, a statement by the President, and several "background" documents.[84] The order, summarily relieving MacArthur of all commands, has been previously quoted.[85] In the accompanying statement, Truman said it had become necessary to remove the General because he could not give "wholehearted support" to the policies of the United States and the United Nations. Acknowledging that "full and vigorous debate" is a vital element in democracy, the President went on to say: "It is fundamental, however, that military

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[83] Truman, Memoirs, II, 448-49; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 522-23. A full description of the press "leak" can be found in Phillips, Truman Presidency, 342-43. For detailed testimony dealing with the method of relief, see Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 345-46, 348-49, 418-19, 519-20, 784; Pt. 2, 746-47; Pt. 3, 1777.

[84] Truman, Memoirs, II, 449. See also, Item No. 77, Statement by the President on Relieving General MacArthur of His Commands, April 11, 1951, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1951, 222-23. The documents released to accompany this statement were copies of the President's directive of December 6, 1950, the JCS messages of March 20, 24, 1951, MacArthur's statement of March 24, and MacArthur's letter to Congressman Joseph Martin. See ibid., 223. See also, Washington Post, April 12, 1951.

[85] See preceding chapter. Text is also found in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3546.

commanders must be governed by the policies and directives issued to them in the manner provided by our laws and constitution."[86] Truman also addressed the nation by radio on the evening of April 11. The bulk of the speech explained basic policies in Korea. Only two paragraphs mentioned the dismissal of MacArthur and they were largely a rephrasing of the statement he had issued early that morning.[87]

General MacArthur was informed of his dismissal by his wife, who learned of it from an aide listening to a news broadcast.[88] The relief process was abrupt and lacked the courtesy many felt he should have been accorded. The method of dismissal did seem, as MacArthur said, to show ". . .callous disregard for the ordinary decencies."[89] His relief came, he said, ". . .just when victory was within my grasp."[90] Shortly after the news was received,

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[86]Item No. 77, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1951, 222; Truman, Memoirs, II, 449.

[87]Item No. 78, Radio Report to the American People on Korea and on U.S. Policy in the Far East, April 11, 1951, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1951, 223-27.

[88]MacArthur testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 26; Willoughby and Chamberlain, MacArthur, 423.

[89]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 395. See also, Willoughby and Chamberlain, MacArthur, 417; Whitney, MacArthur, 473.

[90]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 392.

General Whitney told the Tokyo press corps somewhat melodramatically: "I have just left the General. He received the word magnificently. . . . His soldierly qualities were never more pronounced. I think this has been his finest hour."[91] MacArthur's own estimate of his personal worth was never higher than when he described in his memoirs the world's reaction to the news of his dismissal:

> Moscow and Peiping rejoiced. The bells were rung and a holiday atmosphere prevailed. The left-wingers everywhere exulted. But in the Far East, there was bewilderment and shock. I had been there so long in supreme command that I had become a kind of symbol of the free world--a bulwark against the spread of Communism. The removal of the symbol was not understood, and tended to shake faith in our ways and methods.[92]

Much of the intial response to MacArthur's dismissal in the United States took the form of vehement attacks on President Truman. He was burned in effigy in numerous cities. Dock workers in New York walked out in a protest strike. The Los Angeles City Council adjourned to sorrowfully contemplate the "political assassination" of MacArthur. The legislatures of Illinois, Michigan, Florida and California all passed resolutions condemning Truman's action.[93] Time magazine commented, "Seldom had a more unpopu-

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[91]Quoted in Willoughby and Chamberlain, MacArthur, 423.

[92]MacArthur, Reminiscences, 395. See also, Whitney, MacArthur, 473; Hunt, Untold Story of Douglas MacArthur, 516-17.

[93]Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 211; Lukacs, History of the Cold War, footnote, 94.

lar man fired a more popular one."[94] Many in the Senate were incredulous. Senator William Jenner announced solemnly that "a secret inner coterie" directed by Soviet agents was running the government of the United States. Senator Richard M. Nixon saw the dismissal as rank appeasement of Communism. He suggested that the Senate censure the President and insist that he reinstate MacArthur to command. Senator Joseph McCarthy said the President must have made his decision while drunk on benedictine and bourbon. McCarthy added: "The son of a bitch ought to be impeached."[95]

Writing at the time of the dismissal, journalist Arthur Krock said that it is a "basic American principle" that the authority of the President as Commander in Chief must not be undermined by military officers: "This basic principle General MacArthur disregarded with increasing

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[94]Quoted in Eldorous L. Dayton, Give 'em Hell Harry: An Informal Biography of the Terrible Tempered Mr. T. (New York: The Devin-Adair Company, 1956), 201. A report of a public opinion poll taken at the end of June 1951 showed Republicans to be very "solid" in their support of MacArthur in the dispute with Truman. Democrats were "evenly divided" in their support according to a White House memorandum, Lloyd to Murphy, et. al., (undated), Lloyd Files, MacArthur Firing, Truman Library.

[95]Richard H. Rovere, Senator Joe McCarthy (New York: World Publishing Company, 1959), 12. Hereinafter cited as Rovere, Senator Joe McCarthy. See also, LaFeber, America, Russia, and the Cold War, 120; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 212-13; Rovere and Schlesinger, The General and the President, 12-13; Warren, President as World Leader, 344.

openness, but it certainly does not seem to be disapproved by millions of Americans."[96] Author John Spanier claimed that telegrams poured into Congress at a ratio of ten to one against Truman's decision.[97] If internal White House reports can be accepted on this subject, Truman faired much better in messages addressed directly to him. By the end of the fifth week following MacArthur's relief, Truman had received 46,389 letters and telegrams described as "Pro MacArthur" and 37,708 that were "Pro President."[98] Apparently some of the President's correspondents became quite abusive in their denunciations of his decision. Memoranda from the White House mail room listed a total of 1,745 letters and cards "critical of the President" as having been sent to the Secret Service.[99]

Untold millions of Americans may have opposed Truman's recall of MacArthur, but an overwhelming majority of

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[96]Arthur Krock, "MacArthur and Truman," New York Times, April 21, 1951, reprinted in Krock, In the Nation, 186.

[97]Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 211.

[98]Margeurite Mondlock to William Hopkins, May 8, 1951, Truman Papers, OF, 584-MacArthur's Dismissal, President's Action in Relieving General MacArthur (folder 2), Truman Library.

[99]This figure is a compilation of data contained in numerous file memoranda from the weeks just after MacArthur's relief, located in ibid.

the working press supported his decision. An extensive survey of 332 newspaper and periodical correspondents in Washington, Korea, Tokyo, and at the United Nations was made a few weeks after the relief action.[100] Eighty-five percent of the reporters questioned believed Truman to be right in removing the General; only thirteen percent felt he was wrong. Most also agreed that the decision was ". . .delayed too long and delivered too bluntly."[101] The main reasons given by those correspondents who agreed that the recall was warranted were almost identical to the reasons stated for their concurrence by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The reporters saw MacArthur as obviously out of sympathy with national policy. More importantly, they emphasized the necessity for civilian control: ". . .we must preserve the Constitutional right of the Commander-in-Chief to remove an insubordinate general."[102] With considerable foresight, seventy-two percent of the reporters polled indicated a belief that the American people would eventually

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[100]Elmo Roper and Louis Harris, "The Press and the Great Debate: A Survey of Correspondents in the Truman-MacArthur Controversy," Saturday Review of Literature, XXXIV (July 14, 1951), 6ff. Hereinafter cited as Roper and Harris, "The Press and the Great Debate."

[101]Ibid., 7.

[102]Ibid., 6.

approve the President's decision.[103]

The emotional fever was running high as MacArthur arrived in San Francisco from the Far East. The defeated commander, stripped of all powers and accused of flagrant insubordination, was driven about the streets, not in a tumbrel, but in a Cadillac limousine of the type used for a conquering hero or a visiting monarch.[104] In the minds of many, he was both. MacArthur described his welcome home as "tumultuous." With unabashed conceit he wrote: "It seemed to me that every man, woman, and child in San Francisco turned out to cheer us."[105] Having been invited to address a joint session of the Congress on April 19, he flew on to Washington where, the General recalled, ". . .it looked as though the whole District of Columbia greeted

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[103] Ibid., 8. Editor Harold Stein may have interpreted the public mood best when he wrote: ". . .the noisy but evanescent outcry in MacArthur's favor really reflected dismay over the dismal events in Korea, the stirrings of violent partisan political warfare, and general distaste with the Truman Administration; it did not represent any substantial support of MacArthur's proposal to enlarge the fighting." See "Editorial Comments: To the Yalu and Back," in Stein (ed.), American Civil-Military Decisions: A Book of Case Studies (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1963), 641. A similar view has been expressed by John Spanier in his, American Foreign Policy, 96-97.

[104] Rovere and Schlesinger, The General and the President, 11.

[105] MacArthur, Reminiscences, 400.

our arrival."[106]

MacArthur's speech to the Congress was a forensic masterpiece. He began by depicting himself as just another American "in the fading twilight of life," desiring only to serve his country. In the body of the speech he emphasized the importance of the Far East and his role there, glossed over the reasons for his recall, reiterated his belief that there was no substitute for total victory, and dismissed the President's policies as appeasement. He closed with the touching, now-famous lines about old soldiers not dying, but just fading away, promising to do likewise.[107]

The "fading away" process was protracted and voluble. It began with MacArthur's being borne from the Congress down Pennsylvania Avenue to the Washington Monument in yet another ceremonial automobile. As he rode between ranks of cheering admirers, formations of Air Force jet fighters and bombers provided an aerial escort. In ceremonies at the monument grounds, MacArthur was awarded a silver tea service by his followers along with a seven-

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[106] Ibid.

[107] MacArthur, Address to Joint Meeting of the Congress, April, 1951, printed in Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3553-58. Text of address is also published in MacArthur, Reminiscences, 400-405; Bernstein and Matusow (eds.), Truman Administration, 461-69.

teen-gun salute.[108] Truman, sitting in the White House a short distance from this scene, had anticipated it all. In a letter to a friend on the day he signed the dismissal order, he had written: "It will undoubtedly create a great furor but under the circumstances I could do nothing else and still be President of the United States."[109]

Through these ceremonies and numerous addresses, General MacArthur had ample opportunity to present his case to the public. The climax came in the Senate investigation of the reasons for MacArthur's dismissal, which began on May 3, 1951. Thirteen witnesses were heard in a forty-two day period in which a total of 2,450,000 words were recorded on 3,691 pages of printed testimony.[110] MacArthur, the lead-off witness, testified for three days.[111] The General assured his questioners that he did not "in any way" question the President's decision to fire

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[108]Rovere, The General and the President, 11. A similar reception followed shortly after in New York City where an estimated 7.5 million people lined the streets of his procession. See Spanier, American Foreign Policy, 96; Rees, Age of Containment, 40.

[109]Truman to unidentified correspondent, April 10, 1951, quoted in Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 33.

[110]Payne, Marshall Story, 319; "A Brief Commentary on the Witnesses Appearing Before the Committee," Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3574.

[111]The bulk of testimony taken, in addition to MacArthur's, came from General Bradley and Secretaries Marshall and Acheson, who testified for five, eight, and nine days, respectively. Far East Hearings, Pt. 5, 3574-75.

him or his right to do so. But he repeatedly dismissed as "completely invalid" the reason Truman gave for dismissing him--a lack of sympathy with established policies--by claiming that while he sometimes disagreed with the wisdom and judgment of the orders and directives he received, he carried them out to the best of his ability.[112]

There appeared to be an area of agreement between MacArthur and Truman over the command latitude that must be accorded by the commander in chief to a theater commander. MacArthur testified that once war began a theater commander had to direct--politically, economically, and militarily--the whole area encharged to him: "You have got to trust at that stage of the game when politics fails, and the military takes over, you must trust the military. . . ."[113] On the same subject, later in his testimony, he said, ". . .there should be no non-professional interference in the handling of troops in a campaign. You have professionals to do that job and they should be per-

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[112]MacArthur testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 27-28, 197, 282-84, 289, 308. An embarassing typographical error (or Freudian slip) at one point in his testimony, records MacArthur as saying: "I have not carried out every directive that I have ever received. . . ." See ibid., 30. Emphasis supplied. For additional statements by MacArthur relative to his avowed belief in civil supremacy, see Reminiscences, 292-93.

[113]Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 45.

mitted to do it. . . ."[114] Truman once related in an interview his belief that one of MacArthur's tactical decisions seemed wrong, but that he did not countermand it because the General was commander in the field. He explained: "You pick your man, you've got to back him up. That's the only way a military organization can work."[115] Truman's belief in allowing commanders tactical latitude was more than an abstract principle to him. He never publicly criticized his commanders' conduct of field operations, nor dictated troop dispositions to them, except in the broad, strategic sense. For example, in July 1950 he told reporters: "I am not in charge of the military in Korea. . . , a report is made every day by General MacArthur, and he is the one to evaluate the situation. I rely on his evaluation."[116] To this extent, the General and the President were in agreement on the civil-military relationship.

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[114] Ibid., 289.

[115] Quoted in Neustadt, Presidential Power, 124-25. See also, Dahl, Pluralist Democracy, 105.

[116] Item No. 191, Press Conference, July 13, 1950, Public Papers. . . Truman, 1950, 523. In another press conference following MacArthur's removal, Truman said that the decision to send UN forces up to the Yalu was, ". . .a matter of tactics in the field, and is the responsibility of the field commander. I never interfere with the field commander in any of their maneuvers." Item No. 95, ibid., (1951), 264.

A major area of disagreement between Truman and MacArthur which was highlighted in the latter's testimony was, of course, the political restrictions which the President's limited war policy placed on the conduct of military operations. "I do unquestionably state," MacArthur said, "that when men become locked in battle, that there should be no artifice under the name of politics, which should handicap your own men. . . ."[117] In voicing public opposition to these limitations, MacArthur believed he was performing a service, because the American public had the right to know the truth and Truman had no right to "gag" him.[118] In his memoirs, MacArthur quoted British Field Marshall Lord Alanbrooke, who had defended MacArthur's actions by saying that any general who is unable to obtain the political advice and guidance he seeks has a responsibility to act on his own.[119] The fullest expression of MacArthur's revolutionary interpretation of his responsibility to civilian authority can be found in an address

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[117] *Far East Hearings*, Pt. 1, 45. See also, *ibid.*, 39-40, 67-68.

[118] *Ibid.*, 99-100. For some general analyses of MacArthur's testimony in the hearings, see Spanier, *Truman-MacArthur Controversy*, 236-38; Osgood, *Limited War*, 173-74; Arthur Krock, "MacArthur's Testimony," *New York Times*, May 5, 1951, reprinted in Krock, *In the Nation*, 186-89.

[119] MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 392-93.

he made to the legislature of Massachusetts three months after his dismissal:

> I find in existence a new and heretofore unknown and dangerous concept that the members of the Armed Forces owe their primary allegiance and loyalty to those who temporarily exercise the authority of the executive branch of the government, rather than to the country and its Constitution they are sworn to defend. No proposition could cast greater doubt on the integrity of the Armed Forces.[120]

The Truman Administration did not sit passively by during this period, but counterattacked; the basic argument being that the really "new and dangerous concept" was embodied in MacArthur's public challenge to the policies of his Commander in Chief. A major response to the charges MacArthur was publicizing at the time was delivered by General Bradley one week after the dismissal. Speaking at Chicago, Bradley refuted MacArthur point by point. Whereas MacArthur said there was no Korean policy, Bradley listed its primary objectives, making it plain that appeasement--another MacArthur charge--was not part of that policy. Without naming him specifically, Bradley described MacArthur's solutions for Korea as not being militarily feasible. Bradley emphasized that the Korean conflict had to be understood as part of a worldwide American commitment to contain Communism and prevent the onset of a third

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[120]Quoted in Ridgway, Korean War, 233.

world war.[121] To counter rumors to the contrary, on April 19, 1951, the Pentagon issued a statement saying that ". . .the action taken by the President in relieving Gen. MacArthur was based upon the unanimous recommendations of the President's principal civilian and military advisers, including the Joint Chiefs of Staff."[122]

Truman remianed publicly aloof from the controversy engendered by MacArthur's relief throughout April, issuing no statements in rebuttal and responding noncommitally to pointed questions in his press conferences. Privately, he was not as disinterested. For example, in a note to Averell Harriman on April 24, Truman wrote: "He (Eisenhower) seems to be on top of the situation and he also seems to understand the international situation better than another 5-star General I can name."[123] In a press conference held the day MacArthur first testified in the hearings on his dismissal, Truman openly joined the battle to defend his policies. The President told report-

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[121]DOD Release No. 72-51S, "Address by General Omar Bradley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters, April 17, 1951," copy in White House files, Korean Documents (folder 2), Truman Library. For examples of MacArthur's charges, see his testimony in Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 30, 39-40, 146-47.

[122]Statement on the Relief of General MacArthur, April 19, 1951, copy in White House Files, Korean Documents (folder 2), Truman Library.

[123]Truman to Harriman, April 24, 1951, Eisenhower Papers, PF/DDE, Truman folder (2), Eisenhower Library.

ers that it was only "just recently" that MacArthur had permitted the Central Intelligence Agency to operate in his command. He said that it was MacArthur's persuasion at Wake Island that convinced him the Chinese Communists would not intervene in North Korea. Truman also told the assembled reporters that he was confident of vindication once testimony in the hearings was completed."[124]

In a nationally-broadcast address on May 7 the President struck back repeatedly at the various charges levelled by MacArthur in his just completed testimony. Acknowledging that he had refused to extend the Far East conflict, he explained that such action offered no real promise of ending the war, but posed the very real threat of expanding and protracting the hostilities. As to the As to the suggestion by MacArthur that the United States "go it alone," if the allies were unwilling to attack China, Truman said this would destroy the United Nations, NATO, and the entire collective security system. Throughout, he returned to the overall guiding principle of his

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[124]Item No. 95, Press Conference, May 3, 1951, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1951, 261-62. Truman had privately expressed the belief that justification for his firing of MacArthur would emerge in the congressional hearings. Writing in late April to a New Jersey legislator, Truman had first expressed this conviction. Truman to Robert G. Hendrickson, April 27, 1951, Truman Papers, OF, 584-MacArthur Dismissal, President's Action in Relieving General Douglas MacArthur of His Commands, (folder 2), Truman Library.

policy decisions, the prevention of a third world war.[125] MacArthur was never mentioned by name, but he was unquestionably the main topic, a point not lost to the press in their accounts the next day.[126]

In the lengthy, often tedious pages of the hearings in Congress can be found the vindication which Truman had predicted. No objective reading of these pages can lead to any other conclusion but that the President was amply justified in removing MacArthur from command. Virtually all of the testimony which followed MacArthur's rebutted his basic contentions. This evidence, cited at great length throughout the present and preceding chapters, does not require restatement here. The case for MacArthur's dismissal was cogently summarized by General Marshall:

> . . .the responsibilities and the courses of action assigned to a theater commander necessarily apply to his own immediate area of responsibility. It is completely understandable and, in fact, at times commendable that a theater commander should become so wholly wrapped up in his own aims and responsibilities that some of the directives received by him from higher authority are not those that he would have written for himself. There is nothing new about this sort of thing in our military history. What is new, and what has brought about the necessity for General MacArthur's removal, is the

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[125] Item No. 96, Address at a Dinner of the Civil Defense Conference, May 7, 1951, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1951, 265-69, passim.

[126] See, for example, New York Herald-Tribune, May 8, 1951; Washington News, May 8, 1951.

> wholly unprecedented situation of a local theater commander publicly expressing his displeasure at and his disagreement with the foreign and military policy of the United States.
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> It became apparent that General MacArthur had grown so far out of sympathy with the established policies of the United States that there was grave doubt as to whether he could any longer be permitted to exercise the authority in making decisions that normal command functions would assign to a theater commander. In this situation, there was no other recourse but to relieve him.[127]

Douglas MacArthur had described the onset of the Korean conflict as "Mars' last gift to an old warrior."[128] Seemingly, fate had handed him the capstone for a career already legendary. Up to the moment of Chinese intervention, the final chapter was ending in fairy-tale fashion; the hordes of the defeated aggressor in mindless flight from the righteous wrath of the avenging angel. Fortune, however, when shown a hero, wrote a tragedy. If was not the defeat, nor the conceit that could not acknowledge failure which tarnished the heroic figure, but the paranoidal assault on his civilian superiors, striking at the very base of the system to which he had devoted over a half-century of his life. Wilber Hoare has described Mac-

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[127] Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 325. Emphasis supplied. See also, Payne, Marshall Story, 319-20. The other important Army commanders of the period are in substantial agreement with Marshall. For example, see Bradley testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 752-53, 1041-44; Collins testimony, ibid., 1194-95; Ridgway, Korean War, 141-42, 152-53.

[128] Quoted in Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 25.

Arthur as a "politico-military anachronism," whose ". . . sense of frustration and rage at being denied an unequivocal victory were not those of a man who understood the reasons for denial and opposed them, but of one who did not understand at all."[129] But in view of MacArthur's acknowledged brilliance, it is difficult to believe that he had no comprehension of the concept of limited warfare. Rather, it seems, he fully grasped the concept intellectually, but rejected it as a principle for the conduct of military operations. Then, failing to win acceptance for his views through the established channels, he took his case to the public in clear and open opposition to the Commander in Chief.[130]

The historical parallel between Lincoln's difficulties with General George McClellan and his with MacArthur was not overlooked by a Civil War buff like Truman. He recognized a basic difference, in that he was trying to

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[129]Hoare, "Truman," 199-200. For a discussion of the "living legend" image attached to MacArthur, see Rovere and Schlesinger, The General and the President, 3-5; Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 147-49.

[130]General agreement with the view expressed can be found in Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 198-99. Wilber Hoare disagrees with this interpretation. It is his belief that MacArthur never intended to dispute Truman's authority as Commander in Chief and never felt that he had done so. See Hoare, "Truman," 205-207. For an example of MacArthur's refutation of Truman's limited war policy, see his testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 1, 39-40.

keep a checkrein on MacArthur, whereas Lincoln was trying desperately to get McClellan to attack.[131] But Truman implies that McClellan (like MacArthur) was fired for politically opposing his commander in chief, when in truth he was dismissed for his failures as a general.[132] The real parallel may well be, as one writer noted, that like McClellan, MacArthur was ". . .confusing his popularity as a symbol of patriotism in a nation at war with his duty as a general on active service."[133] Had MacArthur first retired and then opposed Truman's policies in the political arena (as Eisenhower did), he would have been beyond reproach. But by attacking from within, he forced his own dismissal:

> . . .it is . . . obvious that a democratic government cannot permit a general of the Mac(Arthur) type to continue in his position. His sustained opposition would unsettle the very basis of democratic authority. In such a situation the general can render a greater service to his cause and can stimulate democratic discussion of the issue involved by getting out of the army and taking his case to the people. . . .[134]

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[131] Truman, Memoirs, II, 443. MacArthur unfavorably compared Truman's attitude toward him with Lincoln's in a somewhat "comparable circumstance" involving General Grant. See his Reminiscences, 394.

[132] T. Harry Williams, "The Macs and the Ikes, America's Two Military Traditions," American Mercury, LXXV (October, 1952), 37. Hereinafter cited as Williams, "The Macs and the Ikes."

[133] Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur, 40. Another commentary on the parallels between McClellan and MacArthur is in Ridgway, Korean War, 152, 261.

[134] Williams, "The Macs and the Ikes," 38-39.

The basis for the disagreement between Truman and MacArthur rested upon fundamental strategic policy determinations. Truman had decided that extending military operations beyond Korea itself, in order to obtain a victory in Korea, involved too great a risk of general war. Also, the President determined that victory--in the sense of Korean unification--was neither worth the increased effort that would be required, nor essential to American security.[135] MacArthur, of course, considered the Far Eastern struggle to be the pivotal, climactic contest between the forces of capitalism and communism. Truman came to accept a military stalemate which preserved South Korean sovereignty as achievement enough; MacArthur could accept no alternative to complete victory. Since Truman neither could nor would relinquish his authority as Commander in Chief to conduct the war, MacArthur had to go.

The restrictions placed upon MacArthur by the limited war policy--a few were later lifted--did represent a significant check by the President on the conduct of military operations.[136] Raymond G. O'Connor correctly

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[135]Hoare, Truman," 205.

[136]MacArthur was denied permission to bomb Racin, a North Korean port near the Soviet border. In August, 1951 Ridgway was allowed to strike this target. Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 107-108. In June 1952 Truman lifted the ban on bombing dams and hydroelectrice plants on the Yalu. Ibid., 319-22. In July 1952 Truman allowed the bombing of Pyongyang which had previously been off-limits. Ibid., 324.

maintains that these controls ". . .enlarged the President's role as Commander-in-Chief."[137] He is probably correct in holding that the conflict with MacArthur was an understandable consequence of Truman's exercising this role. But O'Connor stands on shakier historical ground when he asserts that Truman's "detailed control of battlefield operations" was without any precedent. "Even Lincoln," O'Connor says, "did not match Truman's interference with military tactics."[138] So long as MacArthur (and his successors) operated within the strategic guidelines imposed by the President and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, tactical decisions were neither dictated nor countermanded. Truman did not believe that the field deployment and utilization of forces was a proper function of a commander in chief. Lincoln, particularly when McClellan was in command in the East, was actively engaged in tactical direction of armies in the field.[139]

Truman commented often, after the event, on MacArthur's dismissal and its meaning. He believed that MacArthur did not deliberately set out to challenge his au-

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[137] O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 72.

[138] Ibid.

[139] See, for examples, Lincoln to McClellan, April 9, May 24, October 13, 1862, in Basler (ed.), Collected Works of Lincoln, V, 184-85, 231-32, 460-62.

thority as Commander in Chief, but that his actions did endanger the principle of civilian control which Truman considered fundamental to the existence of a free society.[140] As he wrote to the President of the University of Virginia: "I regret very much that the action had to be taken but the civilian control of the military was at stake and I simply had to do something about it."[141] Or, in a similar vein, to the mayor of Paterson, New Jersey: ". . .in time, people will realize and understand that military commanders must be governed by the policies and directives issued to them in the manner provided by our laws and Constitution."[142]

A college student once asked the ex-President the rationale behind MacArthur's firing. Truman said he fired him for disobeying orders. He added that "maybe" he should have court-martialed him as well.[143] When an interviewer asked him if he considered relieving MacArthur the most courageous act of his Presidency, Truman told him that it

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[140]Truman, Memoirs, II, 443-45, 454.

[141]Truman to Colgate W. Darden, April 14, 1951, Truman Papers, OF, 584-MacArthur's Dismissal, President's Action in Relieving General Douglas MacArthur of His Commands (folder 2), Truman Library.

[142]Truman to Michael U. DeVita, April 27, 1951, ibid.

[143]Truman Speaks, 97.

had not involved courage. The General was insubordinate and was fired. That was all.[144] But at the time of the dismissal, Truman was not as cavalier as he was in his later comments. A week after the recall, he told Representative Carl Albert that MacArthur's distinguished record of military service made his decision very difficult.[145] Two days later the President wrote to another correspondent about the difficulty he had in determining to dismiss, "one of our greatest military commanders."[146]

From Truman's letters in the weeks after the recall order there emerges a constant emphasis: he had acted only after being forced to by MacArthur in consideration of his constitutional responsibilities as Commander in Chief. As, for example, on April 23, he wrote: "In justice to my own responsibility . . . I found myself compelled to take this distressing action."[147] This same reasoning is repeated in his memoirs.[148]

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[144]Quoted in Phillips, Truman Presidency, 350.

[145]Truman to Albert, April 17, 1951, Truman Papers, OF, 584-MacArthur's Dismissal, President's Action in Relieving General Douglas MacArthur of His Commands (folder 2), Truman Library.

[146]Truman to (Mrs.) W. Coleman Branton, April 19, 1951, ibid.

[147]Truman to A.E. Augustine, April 23, 1951, ibid. This file contains many other letters in which Truman emphasized that he acted from a compulsive sense of duty.

[148]Truman, Memoirs, II, 444-45.

In a letter to Dwight Eisenhower, then NATO Supreme Commander, Truman expressed himself on MacArthur's recall with his characteristic bluntness and pungency: "Dear Ike," he wrote on April 12, "I was sorry to have to reach a parting of the way with the big man in Asia but he asked for it and I had to give it to him."[149] And so he did.

The nation should not be made to endure another such controversy. For the future, a new philosophy must enter into the training of the military leadership. It must be clearly understood that the objective in limited warfare is not necessarily victory in the historic sense, but a modus vivendi, a reasonable peace which precludes a general war. Douglas MacArthur would consider this a shameful compromise with "evil." But Truman knew, that barring a fundamental change in man's nature, in a nuclear age there could be no other way.

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[149] Truman to Eisenhower, April 12, 1951, Eisenhower Papers, PF/DDE, Truman folder (2), Eisenhower Library.

## CHAPTER X

## A SUMMING UP

> I will leave it to future historians to judge how well I have done.[1]

The American presidency has evolved with the times. The less hectic pace of the first half of the twentieth century allowed the presidents time for personal direction of the government, time to examine all sides of an issue, time for an endless procession of *pro forma* ceremonials, and time to relish the perquisites of the office. The Roosevelt Administration may be viewed as a transitional phase. World War II greatly accelerated the continuous process of social, political and technological change with which a president must contend. The pace and complex interrelationship of postwar issues have been such that the executive authority has expanded along with the difficulties of administering the office effectively.

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[1] Truman to John T. Carlton, April 17, 1951, Truman Papers, OF, 584, President's Action in Relieving General Douglas MacArthur of His Commands (folder 2), Truman Library.

Harry Truman was the first incumbent in the "new" presidency. The preceding chapters represent only a selective recounting of events relating to exercise of just the military function during his two terms in office. But there is enough here to suggest the enormity of the task which Truman faced. Considering this, Clinton Rossiter wrote: "... . it was no mean achievement simply to have gone through the motions of being President in these eight years."[2] Truman came to believe that no one man could truly fill the presidential office because the responsibilities had become "too many and too great."[3] He also believed that there was a quality about the presidential office that could make the man equal to the task:

> It is a tremendous job. . . . A really huge job. One to make a person stop and think. . . . Any man faced with this job, no matter what he's like, no matter how much or how little he's capable of to begin with--any man will be lifted up by the dignity and responsibility of this job to a place where he can meet it.[4]

Truman was a man of strong principles. Despite a lack of formal education, his own extensive reading in

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[2]Rossiter, American Presidency, 116.

[3]Quoted in Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 10. See also, Phillips, "Truman at 75," 108; Truman, Memoirs, I, 199.

[4]Quoted in Hersey, "Profiles," Pt. 5, 52.

history and government provided him with what Rossiter has called: ". . . a more clear-cut philosophy of presidential power than any predecessor except Woodrow Wilson."[5] Truman saw the President as holder of the final authority, a responsibility that could not be delegated to subordinates.[6] He believed in strong executive leadership and emulated strong liberal Presidents like Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Wilson and the two Roosevelts.[7] Truman was constantly wary of congressional encroachment on executive functions, believing entirely in the separation of powers principle, even to the point of refusing a subpoena from a House committee on those grounds after his presidency.[8]

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[5]Rossiter, American Presidency, 118. See also, Binkley, President and Congress, 338. Truman wrote: "I had trained myself to look back in history for precedents, because instinctively I sought perspective in the span of history for the decisions I had to make." Memoirs, II, 1. He expressed the same sentiment in ibid., I, 121.

[6]Truman, Memoirs, I, 545-46.

[7]Ibid., II, 172-73; Truman, Mr. Citizen, 175. See also, Paige, Korean Decision, 22-23; O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 24-25.

[8]Truman's rejection of the House Un-American Activities Committee's subpoena (November 1953), is quoted in Koenig (ed.), Truman Administration, 70-73. A speech Truman delivered May 8, 1954, deals at length with the dangers of congressional encroachment on the executive powers. See ibid., 16-21. See also, New York Times, December 27, 1952.

"The President," Truman wrote in his memoirs," must use whatever power the Constitution does not expressly deny him."[9] Despite the powers given to the office by the Constitution and legislative enactments, Truman felt that the prime power of the Chief Executive was exhortation: "... .the principal power that the President has is to bring people in and try to persuade them to do what they ought to do without persuasion. . . . That's what the powers of the President amount to."[10] Truman commented on the same subject in a meeting with James Forrestal in 1947. He said that, as President, most of his time was taken up soothing hurt feelings and ". . .saluting the backsides of a large number of people."[11] On another occasion, without being anatomically specific, Truman told an interviewer: ". . .I sit here at the President's desk talking to people and kissing them on both cheeks trying to get them to do what they ought to do without getting kissed."[12]

The Constitution, in particularizing the powers of the President, invests him with only one substantive title,

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[9]Truman, Memoirs, II, 473. See also, O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 23.

[10]Item No. 92, Remarks at the National Conference on Family Life, May 6, 1948, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1948, 247.

[11]Diary Entry, September 25, 1947, in Millis (ed.), Forrestal Diaries, 319-20.

[12]Quoted in Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 11.

that of Commander in Chief. The title and the military function it designates are inseparable from the office.[13] Like many another President, however, Truman liked to think of his military command function as one of the separate and distinct "jobs" or "hats" incumbent within the executive authority.[14] As such, Truman conceived of his function as being executor of all military policy. He defined the issues and objectives, but did not personally determine military policy. Rather, the staff process, channeled through the National Security Council, presented him with military policy recommendations which he accepted, rejected, or revised.[15]

Truman did not attempt to direct the military, but he did exercise unquestioned control. He usually enjoyed a harmonious relationship with the Joint Chiefs and the Defense Secretary, but never allowed them to intrude upon

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[13]Fairman, "President as Commander-in-Chief," 145.

[14]Among the other presidential "jobs" Truman has described at various times are chief executive, party leader, legislator, social head of state and chief diplomat. Truman Speaks, 5-8; Hillman (ed.), Mr. President, 206; Koenig (ed.), Truman Administration, 31; Item No. 366, Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, January 7, 1953, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1952-53, 1114.

[15]For a detailed examination of the functional role of the President under the unification act (1947), see Fairman, "President as Commander-in-Chief," 145-61.

his presidential prerogatives. Maintaining this control meant devoting much time and study to each military proposal and directive. By requiring that all but the most routine of military matters receive his approval prior to issuance, he precluded the possibility of a strong, independent military arising to intimidate the civilian leadership. Truman trusted his military advisers (notably Bradley and Marshall) because they never gave him the slightest cause to mistrust them. He was also willing to allow theater commanders freedom of action, so long as they remained within established policy guidelines. Time and again he emphasized that he did not believe the Commander in Chief should become involved in tactics: "I am not a desk strategist and don't intend to be one," Truman told reporters in 1950. "I leave that to the military men."[16] Or, again in 1951: "That is a military matter, and the President of the United States has never interfered with military maneuvers in the field, and he doesn't expect to interfere in it now."[17]

Truman was a strong Commander in Chief of the type

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[16]Item No. 238, Press Conference, September 7, 1950, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1950, 622.

[17]Item No. 37, Press Conference, February 15, 1951, ibid., (1951), 154. For similar statements by Truman, see ibid., (1948), 250-51; ibid., (1950), 523, 580; Truman, Memoirs, II, 402; Neustadt, Presidential Power, 124-25.

envisioned by the drafters of the Constitution.[18] His effectiveness, unlike that of his predecessor, was not based on personal leadership, or any particular insight or intuition.[19] One of the major accomplishments of his incumbency was that he "institutionalized" the presidency.[20] While all of the structural components have not always functioned as they were designed, the command system of today, somewhat modified, is that instituted by Truman.[21] In an age of intercontinental missles and thermonuclear weaponry, it can be validly argued that this structure is too cumbersome. Truman himself bypassed the staff mechanism when the occasion demanded.

In the crisis over Berlin the President acted without waiting for policy recommendations to evolve. It was his decision alone to stay in Berlin and supply the city by airlift.[22] In the early days of the Korean War

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[18]Hoare, "Truman," 210.

[19]Williams, Americans at War, 142.

[20]Elmer Davis, "Harry S. Truman and the Verdict of History," The Reporter (February 3, 1953), 18. Hereinafter cited as Davis, "Harry S. Truman and the Verdict of History."

[21]Williams, Americans at War, 142-43; Hoare, "Truman," 183-84. See also, Davis, "Harry S. Truman and the Verdict of History," 18-19.

[22]See Chapter VI, passim.

Truman unhesitatingly ordered ground troops into action (one regimental combat team) from his bedside telephone.[23] In the entire week-long process of decision committing the United States in Korea, the President did not once involve the National Security Council.[24] Also, Truman decided to fire General MacArthur and then went through the motions of obtaining the recommendations of his military advisers. What he would have done had they not concurred remains open to conjecture.

In retrospect, one of Truman's most serious misjudgments was allowing the success of the Inchon invasion to influence a departure from the original objective in Korea. The United States had gone to war to repel the North Korean invaders and restore peace. The Inchon assault restored the status quo. Truman then allowed what had been essentially a defensive action to become offensive by sending MacArthur across the thirty-eighth parallel. Through military operations the Administration hoped to gain a political objective--Korean unification.[25] The

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[23]See Chapter VII, passim.

[24]See Chapter VII, passim.

[25]Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, 52. See also, Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back," 585, 593; Bradley testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 2, 954, 1054; Ridgway, Korean War, 230-31. For a full study of the factors which led Truman to accept Korean unification as a new war objective, see Neustadt, Presidential Power, 125-32, 140-41.

United Nations, in a General Assembly resolution adopted October 7, 1950, sanctioned this action.[26]

The Chinese Communist intervention in November required Truman to choose between committing far more resources or modifying his war aims. He did not immediately act, but waited until the UN forces had regained the thirty-eighth parallel before accepting a position approximating status quo ante bellum as an appropriate basis for negotiation. It was in the hearings on MacArthur's recall that this new policy was acknowledged. Secretary Acheson testified that the "political objective" of the United States since 1945, and of the United Nations since 1947, was the establishment of a free, unified, democratic Korean state. The "military mission" was to repel the North Korean aggressors and establish peace and security in the area. "Unhappily," Acheson said, "the intervention of the Chinese Communists threw our forces back and made it militarily difficult, if not impossible, to acheive the political objective."[27]

Truman's decision to invade and conquer North

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[26] United States Policy in the Korean Conflict, 3.

[27] Acheson testimony, Far East Hearings, Pt. 3, 1729, 1734-35, 1782, 2256-57. Generals Marshall and Bradley testified to the same effect, see ibid., Pt. 1, 570; Pt. 2, 937-38. See also, Acheson, Present at the Creation, 517-18, 529, 531.

Korea was a revision of the containment doctrine. In previous applications of this policy during the Cold War--in Greece, Turkey and Berlin--the American military response had been carefully gauged so as to counter Communist expansionism and restore the status quo. Once this was achieved, diplomatic means were found to end the confrontation.[28] But by insisting on the unification of all Korea, Truman had taken the offensive, intent upon the destruction of a Communist satellite nation. The Communist version of containment then required a response which restored equilibrium and culminated in a negotiated settlement that returned the penisula to its prewar condition.

American strategic policy has generally been based not on action, but reaction to stimuli. In the post-World War II era the stimulus has been provided by "Communist aggression." This defensive posture, perhaps requisite in a democratic system, takes away any advantages that accrue to an aggressor, such as picking the time and place for disputation.

The "limited-action/limited-response" military decisions made by Truman were ad hoc adaptations to a succession of tense confrontations in a sadly-bipolarized world. His decisions in each instance were designed to avoid the

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[28] Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 259-60.

atomic maelstrom of another total war.[29] In Truman's words: ". . .the one purpose that dominated me in everything I thought and did was to prevent a third world war."[30] As the sole human ever to press the nuclear trigger, Truman must have been more aware than anyone that atomic technology made total war the ultimate irrationality. "The atomic bomb," John Spanier aptly observed, "made the world safe only for limited wars."[31] Viewed in that context, the fear of nuclear holocaust has returned a measure of rationality to warfare, reason dictating strict limitations on both means and ends.[32] It is to Harry Truman's everlasting credit that he estab-

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[29]McLellan and Reuss, "Foreign and Military Policies," 34.

[30]Truman, Memoirs, II, Preface, x. See also, Osgood, Limited War, 169; Halperin, "Limiting Process in the Korean War," 97.

[31]Spanier, Truman-MacArthur Controversy, 2.

[32]James, Contemporary Presidency, 161. In his last annual message to Congress, January 7, 1953, Truman emphasized this change in warfare. He said that nuclear war was ". . .not a possible policy for rational men." Then, addressing himself to Soviet Premier Stalin, he said: "You claim belief in Lenin's prophecy that one stage in the development of Communist society would be war between your world and ours. But Lenin was a pre-atomic man, who viewed society and history with pre-atomic eyes. Something profound has happened since he wrote. War has changed its shape and its dimensions. It cannot now be a 'stage' in the development of anything save ruin for your regime and your homeland." Item No. 366, Public Papers. . . Truman, 1952-53, 1125-26.

lished a Cold War precedent based on this proposition.

There was certainly no diminution in the traditional role of the commander in chief during Truman's tenure of office. In his exercise of the military function of the presidency, Truman had enlarged somewhat on the prevailing concepts. This is particularly true in consideration of his disregard for the military authority of the Congress. Truman decided to aid Turkey and Greece, defy the blockade of Berlin, and intervene in a foreign war, all without the prior approval of Congress. Also, after the Korean War began, Truman sent four Army divisions into Europe to bolster NATO defenses in the belief that the attack in Asia was simply a feint by the Soviet Union. The President did so despite strong minority opposition from the Senate. "In so doing, he expanded presidential authority as Commander-in-Chief to encompass the peacetime disposal of forces in meeting the obligations of a military alliance."[33]

Through his efforts as Commander in Chief, Truman made the military establishment over, generally, for the better. His desegregation of the military services not only preceded but also had an immeasurable influence upon the domestic civil rights movement in the 1950's and '60's. Unification of the armed forces did not achieve all that

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[33]O'Connor, "Harry S. Truman: New Dimensions of Power," 59.

Truman had envisioned. It did modernize the command system and make the military establishment more responsive to the Commander in Chief's direction. But, for the most part, the massive Pentagon monolith absorbed the imposed reforms of unification and continued on without marked change, save that it obtained strength from unity.[34] By the passage of the Atomic Energy Act of 1946 and his resistance to subsequent military encroachment on atomic weapons policy, Truman preserved for future commanders in chief the ultimate decision on utilization of the ultimate weapon.[35]

Harry Truman was the kind of leader whom, in Clinton Rossiter's words, ". . .history will delight to remember."[36] The very foibles and contradictions for which he was scorned will set him apart from the mass of of his predecessors and successors who have been too often absorbed in posturing for posterity. He was not the most intelligent, articulate or inspiring President this nation has ever had, and he was aware of that. Knowing it, he worked all the harder. One of his favorite, oft-repeated anecdotes concerned a gravestone in Arizona which bore the

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[34]See Chapter V, passim.

[35]See Chapter IV, passim.

[36]Rossiter, American Presidency, 119.

inscription: "Here lies Jack Williams, he done his damndest."[37] For Harry Truman's Presidency, no more fitting epitaph could be devised. Four days after taking the oath of office as President he had said, "I ask only to be a good and faithful servant of my Lord and my people."[38] And so it was; for whatever his shortcomings, the nation has never known a more dedicated or faithful servant.

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[37] Item No. 98, Press Conference, April 17, 1952, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1952-53, 270. See also, New York Times, December 27, 1952; Washington Post, December 27, 1952; Koenig (ed.), Truman Administration, 29.

[38] Item No. 2, Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress, April 16, 1945, Public Papers . . . Truman, 1945, 6.

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# VITA

Richard Frederick Haynes was born in Boston, Massachusetts, on January 29, 1935. He was educated in the public school systems of Woonsocket, Rhode Island, and New Orleans, Louisiana. In January, 1958, following a tour of military service, he entered Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, Louisiana, from which institution he received the Bachelor of Arts degree in the spring of 1961. In September of that year he entered Louisiana State University to undertake graduate study in the Department of History. He was awarded the degree of Master of Arts in August, 1963. He is a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in August, 1971.

**EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT**

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Major Field: History

Title of Thesis: Truman as Commander in Chief: A Study of President Harry S. Truman's Concept and Exercise of the Military Function of the Presidency, 1945-1953

Approved:

T. Harry Williams
Major Professor and Chairman

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Dean of the Graduate School

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Date of Examination:

June 10, 1971